

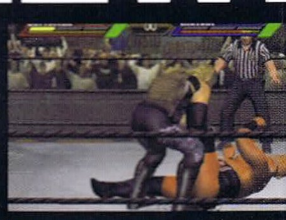
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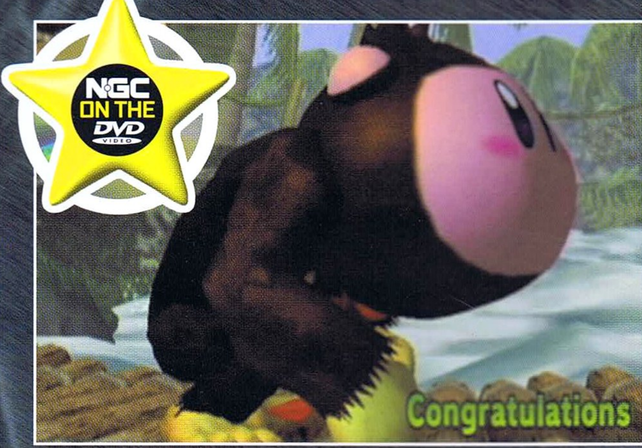
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WAR IS MORE

Only two issues ago we gave you *Rogue Leader*, and now we're returning to the Star Wars universe to take the world's first look at the up-and-coming *Clone Wars*. How come?

Quite simply, we were hugely impressed by what we saw of the game, having not seen it at last month's E3 (it wasn't anywhere near the show, which probably explains it). The mix of ground battles and flight is bold and brilliantly done, and to round things off it looks absolutely *startling*. Remember how you felt when *Rogue Leader* chucked you right into the mixer on the Battle of Hoth and you could make out thousands of tiny Stormtroopers pelting it across the ice? Well, now you can get the same view – *and* you can get down there in the thick of it. Unless something goes wrong in development, *Clone Wars* should be very good indeed.

DVD SPECTACULAR

As you'll probably have already noticed, we've brought you a second edition of **NGC** TV! Since our first new-look issue, we've had over 6,000 emails alone – that's not counting the reams and reams of letters and texts. And, almost without exception, you were telling us you wanted another DVD. So here it is: packed to the rafters with great stuff, including your first sighting of *Zelda* and *Mario Sunshine* in action, plus the fantastic sight of Shigsy himself playing his way through the opening level of *Zelda*. Does anyone else give you this? No way! Stick with us and you won't go far wrong.

PRIMED AND READY

That's to say nothing of *Metroid Prime*, a game we spent hours with this month in order to bring you world-first shots and new gameplay impressions. It really is outstanding, so stashed with brilliance that, even from the opening level, it's obvious it's going to be yet another killer Nintendo franchise. And if all that isn't enough, get a load of what else we've got in store in the list below…

Tim Weaver Editor
ngc@futurenet.co.uk

LOOK OUT FOR THIS!
See this logo next to a game and you'll know you can see footage of it on this month's exclusive DVD…

NGC ON THE DVD VIDEO

TURN TO PAGE 104...
…for the chance to win a trip for two to New York!

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TURN OVER THE PAGE!
For five of the best pieces of action from this month's space-traversing **NGC**!



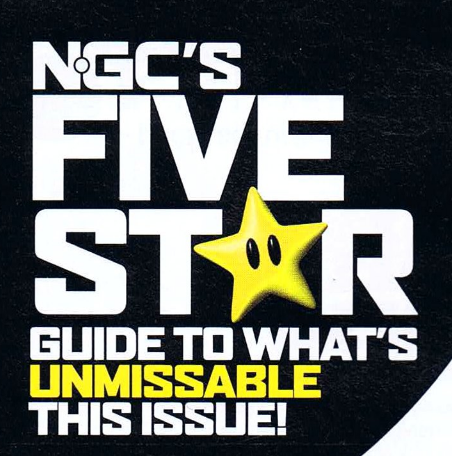
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STAR WARS CLONE WARS

Get the skinny on Gamecube's spectacular second Lucas-fest.





METROID PRIME

Bug-off! Gamecube's *Turok*-beater comes of age, and we've got the shots to prove it...







STAR WARS CLONE WARS

PAGE 8

ALL FETTS ARE OFF!

War is hell? Rubbish – we've played the unofficial sequel to Rogue Leader, and it's the best thing since sliced Jedi...



MEET ENJiKi

When it comes down to who we'd rather have guide us through an issue of **NGC**, *it can only be one of two candidates: Kittsy's mum and Enjiki. Unfortunately, Kittsy's mum's currently taking delivery of a new batch of skin suits for her son, so it falls to the bee-yoo-tiful Enjiki to pop up at important intervals to ease you through the magazine.*





THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

Pixie perfect! The best game ever just got even better…



WWE X8

Sweats appeal! Can you smell what the Rock is cooking? GC's rasslin' debut exposed on import…

4
PAGE
66





SMASH BROS COMPETITION

Bag your very own one-off, custom-made *Smash Bros* trophy NOW!











ON YOUR NGC DVD VIDEO

It's back! We gave you a DVD with our extra-special relaunch issue – **and you swamped us with emails and letters to tell us you wanted another!** So here it is. We've been out to the US and back to nab the exclusive footage on this little beauty. Whack it in your player and rejoice…

NGC DVD COMPO!

Want to win a custom-built Smash Bros trophy? Whack the DVD in your drive!

LEGEND OF ZELDA

SEE IT IN ACTION! You won't believe your eyes as we give you stunning new footage of Nintendo's incredible sequel!

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON THE DISC

What it is	Where it is
A Taste of E3	NGC at E3
Eternal Darkness: Sanity's Requiem	New games
Legend of Zelda	New games
Mario nutter	NGC at E3
Mario Party 4	New games
Metroid Prime	New games
Nintendo and Sega show off F-Zero	NGC at E3
Project BG&E	New games
Rayman 3	New games
Resident Evil	New games
Shigsy demos Zelda	NGC at E3
Shigsy demos Zelda GBA	NGC at E3
Super Smash Bros compo	Extras
Top Gun: Combat Zones	New games
XIII	New games

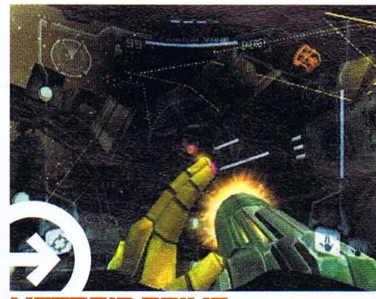






SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

Bingo! It's the footage you wanted of Mazza's sizzling-hot adventure – see the new universe, brand-new characters, Mazza's water backpack and some awesome visual treats. Get to it…



METROID PRIME

Corking video of Samus' super-sequel: incredible levels, bug-decapitating laser fights, plus that all-important visor view. Like the look of our preview on page 14? Well, you've got to see it in action!



NGC AT E3

See Shigsy demoing his new projects, plus the great man playing four-player Zelda GBA *with his mates from Namco, Sega and Capcom. You won't see this footage anywhere else!*

WHAT YOUR NGC DVD WILL PLAY ON:



A DVD player. Any DVD player.



A DVD-playing PC. You know?

A DVD-playing Apple Mac.

A – you heard – **PlayStation 2.**



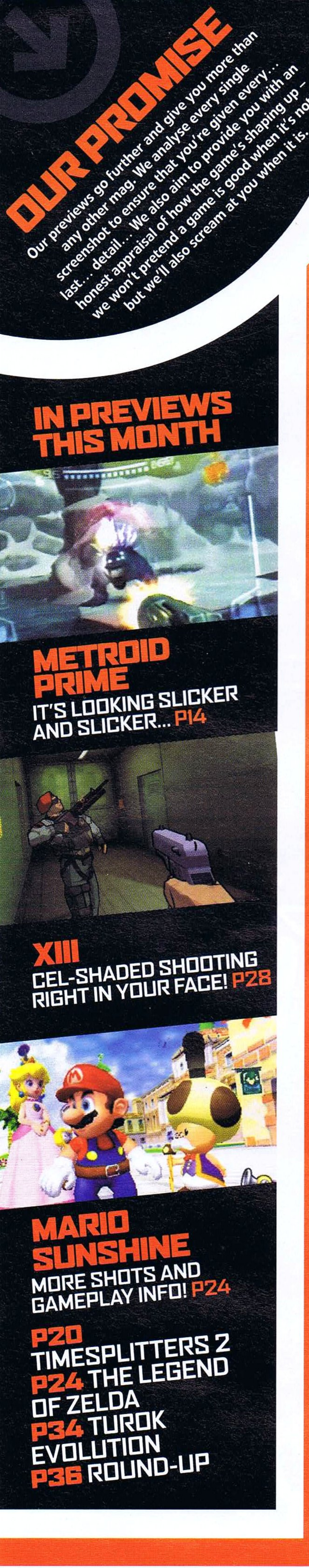


A – you're still hearing – **Xbox.**

WHAT?!
Yep, **NGC**'s DVD *will* play on rival consoles – we're big enough to admit that – but the games you're watching won't. Ever. *Zelda* on Xbox? Uhu. Uhuhu. Uhuhuhuhu.



PROBLEM WITH YOUR DISC? Get writing to the following address, quoting **ref: NIN70/08/02**: Future Publishing Disc Department, 3B Athena Avenue, Elgin Industrial Estate, Swindon, SN2 8HF.





△ By Jango's suit! Just look at all those Clone Troopers away in the distance – head to them and hunt them down!



△ The robots advance in one of the many real-time cinema sequences.



△ Motion blur is an effect the Gamecube can handle very easily.



△ The icy wasteland of Rhen Var forms the backdrop for several of the game's 16-plus missions.

NUMBER ONE!

*"NGC is the only place to be for the hottest info and exclusive shots of the latest Star Wars titles on Nintendo Gamecube." George Lucas**

*of Romford, Essex

STAR WARS THE CLONE WARS

Taken apart for your pleasure and previewed first in **NGC**, this Clone War has been…





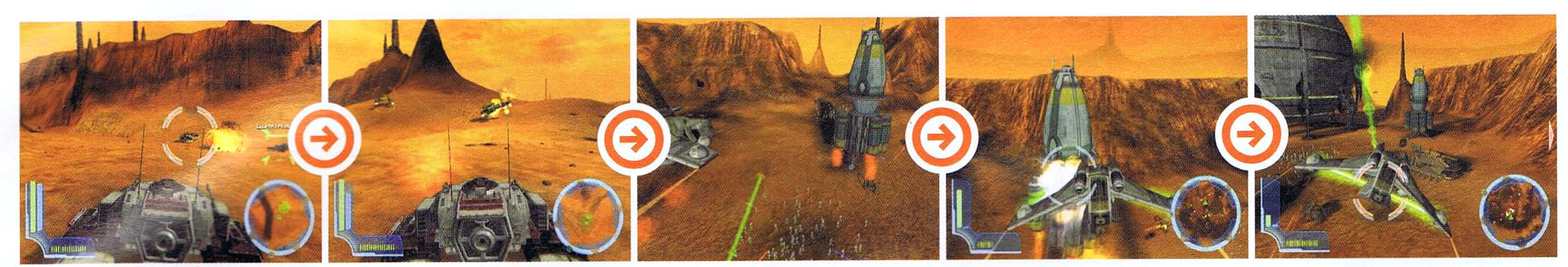
When Gamecube was released in the States last November, the excellent *Rogue Leader* became the first third-party title to outsell a console manufacturer's own launch games.

That's reason enough to be very excited about future Star Wars titles on Gamecube, and now LucasArts are hoping to repeat their success with *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, a kind of 'unofficial sequel' to Factor 5's impressive Cube debut.

Developed by Pandemic Studios, the company responsible for the PC action-strategy title *Battlezone*, *The Clone Wars* picks up the story at the end of the Episode II movie. It follows the starships packed with the Clone Troopers of the Republic as they set off to battle Count Dooku's droid army and prevent the rogue former Jedi obtaining a Sith weapon that will give his side an unassailable advantage in the conflict, helping tilt the balance of the Force very much back in favour of the Dark Side.

It's surely a hint of what to expect in Episode III, and since Episode IV has been out for a quarter of a century every Star Wars fan will have a pretty good idea of the ultimate outcome. But *The Clone Wars* will let you score at least a minor victory in the war against Dooku's Confederacy of Independent Systems.

Playing as Episode II's Jedi heroes Anakin Skywalker, Mace Windu and Obi-Wan Kenobi, you're placed right at the front line of the Republic's army, as both a soldier and commanding officer. Computer-controlled clone troopers will support you in battle, accepting direct orders and following your lead whenever



△ Most of the big battle missions let you switch vehicles at key points as the fight progresses.

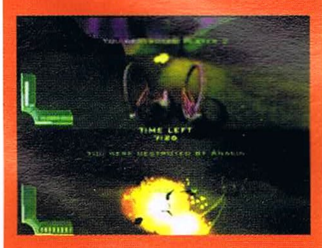


△ A listening outpost, bristling with communications gear (and guns, too).

TECH SPECS

The game supports Dolby Pro Logic II surround sound, which is good news now that the once obscure DPLII is becoming a more common standard on audio equipment (but only very new equipment). Overseas gamers will also get the benefit of a progressive scan mode (60Hz for us Brits).

CONQUER!



There's a selection of multiplayer games for up to four Republic or Confederacy contestants. The basic Duel mode is a deathmatch-style skirmish using the vehicles from the one-player game, while Conquest throws in a strategy element, with a headquarters to defend/capture and an army of clones or droids to build and maintain. The developers promise plenty of additional options too, including a King of the Hill mode and other surprises.

necessary, giving portions of the game a tactical flavour, but mostly it's all about putting you right in the thick of the action, just like the Jedi in the movie's climactic clones vs droids scene. In fact, the first three levels are actually based around that epic scrap on Geonosis (including scene-setting missions where you prepare the area for the Jedi invasion forces), and form a stunning recreation of the movie.

The Clone Wars is unique among console Star Wars games in that it focuses on ground-based combat. Instead of the spectacular space battles that have often been the highlights of previous titles, it's more like a conventional war, or a game composed almost entirely of scenes like the Battle of Hoth level from *Rogue Leader*.

"ARMIES OF FOOT SOLDIERS AND VEHICLES STAGE EPIC ASSAULTS AGAINST ENEMY INSTALLATIONS"

The combat takes place on a huge scale, featuring battlefields that teem with activity. Armies of foot soldiers and vehicles stage epic assaults against enemy installations, while squadrons of fighters, bombers and transport ships provide aerial support.

DID YOU KNOW? The war machines in the Geonosis battle scene were designed to bridge the gap between the 'clean tech' look of Episode I, and the 'used universe' look of Episode IV.

AIR SUPPORT
A Jedi ship flies in the distance, which may or may not be to your immediate benefit. Battles can happen at several locations simultaneously, and it might well have more important tasks elsewhere.

MAN DOWN!
The game certainly doesn't skimp on the special effects. Crippled vehicles spew clouds of smoke, and the explosions are first-rate.

DOOKU'S DROID ARMY
They're everywhere! Honestly, we've never seen a game with so much happening all over the place. Fortunately you've got an army of Clone Troopers at your disposal, and they'll help mop up the ground forces when things get really hectic.

OBJECTIVES
Important objectives are marked out on the main display. Wiping out these turrets will clear the way for a massive assault on the base ahead.



△ **Scoping out a droid patrol. Sometimes it's better to keep your distance.**





△ **The Jedi transport from the movie.**

As the two sides suffer increasing amounts of casualties, reinforcements are brought in by dropship, along with new instruments of warfare such as tanks and walkers.

With all this chaotic action happening on the battlefield it could be all too easy to lose track of the ultimate aim of the conflict, so the developers have split much of the game into easily digestible missions. Large-scale assaults on the enemy and massive battles involving hundreds of combatants are linked by smaller, scene-setting missions such as speeder bike chases and reconnaissance patrols.

There are seven vehicles to control, ranging from the basic speeder bike and STAP (Single Trooper Aerial Platform) to the massive assault walker that is the precursor to the

JEDI MASTERS

Supernaturally skilled in combat, the Jedi are the most feared warriors in the galaxy. Behind the controls of a vehicle or wielding a deadly lightsaber, nothing gets in their way (for very long).



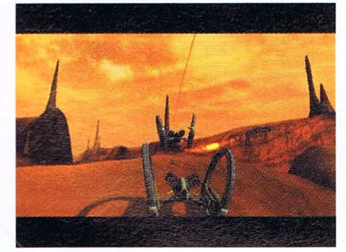
■ Mace Windu demonstrates the speeder bike, one of the fastest modes of transport the game has to offer. As a senior member of the Jedi High Council, commanding as much respect as the mighty Yoda, he clearly has privileged access to all the coolest toys. Woe betide anyone who asks to borrow this particular gizmo.



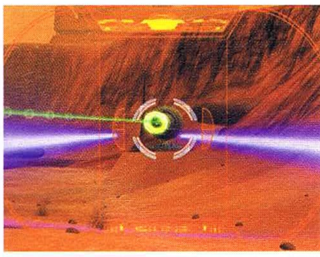
■ A Jedi is most at home with the traditional lightsaber, which makes short work of these battle droids.

■ A computer-controlled Clone Trooper provides support, picking off the droids at the back…

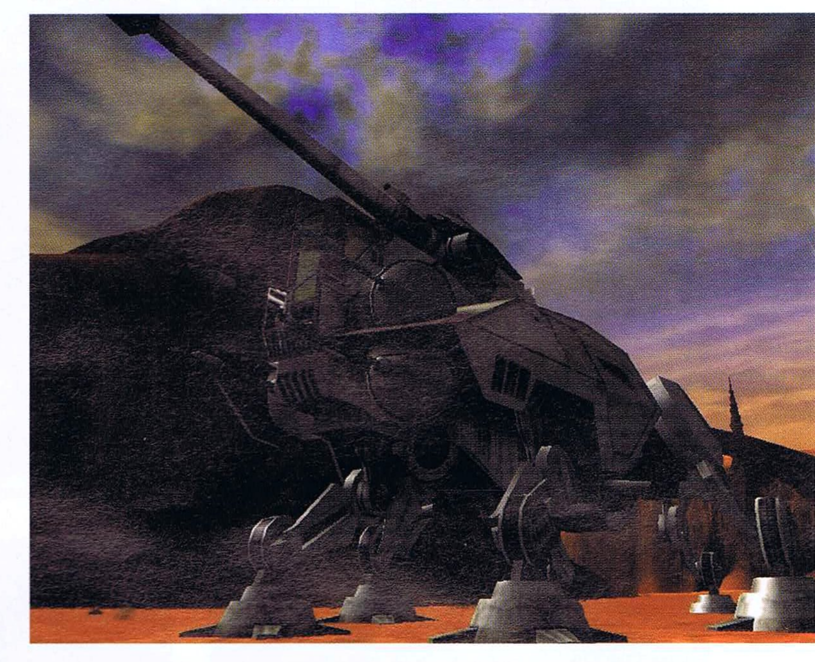
■ …not that a Jedi needs much support when he's capable of deflecting lasers with such ease.

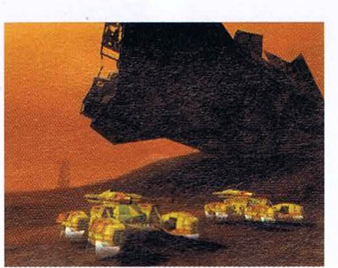


△ The film's designers referred to these craft as 'hula-hoop things'.

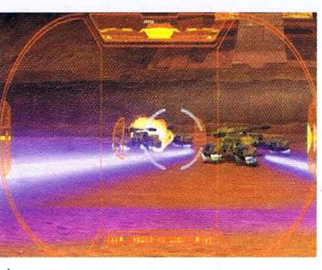


△ Taking out the furthest defensive outposts before moving on.





△ Enemy tanks patrolling the wreckage of a Republic starship…



△ …And getting shot to pieces on their way back to Count Dooku's place.

legendary AT-ATs from The Empire Strikes Back. A Republic gunship lets you take the fight to the air, strafing ground troops and bombing enemy installations, while the Armoured Assault Tank provides the opportunity to drive one of the toughest and most annoying enemies from the N64 game *Battle For Naboo*.

It's possible to change vehicles at various points in the missions, and you can also hop on the back of a two-legged creature called a Maru when you need something more discreet. The selection of transports varies depending on the location, and you'll need to make the most of them because each of the five main levels (including a moon around Kashyyyk, homeworld of the Wookiees) is over 60 square miles in area.

In certain missions you'll have to fight on foot, in bone-crunching battle scenes that are the equal of gritty, realistic games like *Medal of Honor: Frontline* – the clouds of dirt and debris thrown into the air by missile explosions definitely have the look of EA's forthcoming WWII shooter.

You also have access to a range of Jedi powers, which should go some way towards taming the overwhelming odds against you, and it's possible to enlist the help of the Clone Troopers as you wade into a platoon of droids, deflecting laser shots and dispensing Jedi justice. Since all three characters are particularly powerful Jedi, they have no problems dealing with the basic droids. It's possible to throw a lightsaber, guide it on its deadly path through a group of enemies, and catch it neatly as it emerges on the other side, using the power of the Force (or the analogue stick).

Like *Rogue Leader* the game uses the D-pad to issue commands to your allies, but because so much happens during the course of a level, the computer AI has been specifically

> **"THROW A LIGHT SABER, GUIDE IT THROUGH ENEMIES, AND CATCH IT USING THE FORCE"**

TARGET!



If you want to take out a giant structure like this without having to send in waves of ground troops you'll need to target its weak points. In this case the fuel tanks around the outside are obvious design flaws (Dooku must have bought that droid foundry on the cheap) and a well-placed volley of shots will bring it down in flames. Other enemies conceal their weaknesses with more guile, and will take a heavier pounding before succumbing.

WORLD WARRIORS

The game's three 'known' Star Wars worlds are Geonosis, Kashyyyk Moon and Rhen Var (a frozen wasteland mentioned in the novels).

DID YOU KNOW? Episode II was filmed on the same stage as Moulin Rouge – also starring Ewan McGregor.

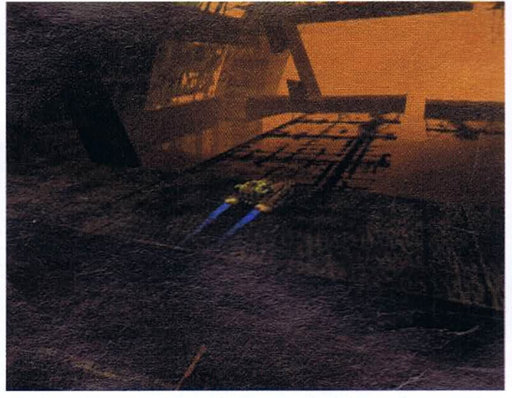
"Rescue the captured Anakin, Obi-Wan and Padmé Amidala"



Δ Attacking one of the Confederacy's giant spherical starships. When it falls, it'll squash all those droids below.



Δ Spectacular stuff, right? Here, an army of Clone Troopers has been sent in to clean up the droids left in that starship.



Δ Very moody, and very foggy too. Let's hope they can fix the game's draw distance in time for its release.



Δ The arrows at the sides of the screen indicate there's important stuff happening to the left and right. All over the place really, since the battles spread everywhere.



Δ These were great in the film – kind of like Star Wars versions of Vietnam-era Hueys, except packed with Jedi Knights rather than men who were n-n-n-nineteen.



developed to allow the hundreds of other units roaming the battlefield to follow their own course of action, and play a more prominent role in the outcome of the war.

The Clone Wars is essentially built on the rock-solid foundations laid down in the critically acclaimed *Battlezone* (on PC), with a heavier bias towards action and a much lighter load on the strategy front. There are no tasks like building units or mining resources to spoil the intensity of the fighting. One of the multiplayer modes, Conquest, includes bases that spawn new troops, and has an element of terrain-capturing about it, but that's about as close as it gets to being an actual RTS-style game.

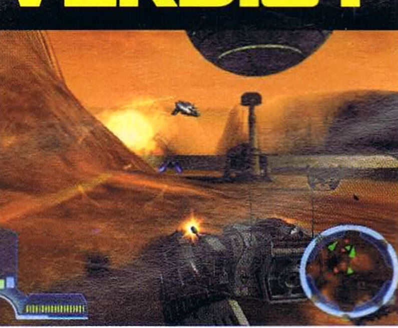
The three Jedi characters don't appear to vary much in terms of their skills and abilities, but they each have an important role to play in telling the story. To begin with you play as Mace Windu, setting up the rescue of the captured Anakin, Obi-Wan and Padmé Amidala as they await ritual execution in the arena on Geonosis. Success in this mission brings with it the possibility of controlling any of the three Jedi during the subsequent rout of Dooku's forces, and in the levels after that the trio will sometimes go their separate ways to fight on different planets, and at other times meet up to take part in a major ground battle together.

After seeing the movie we know that the Clone Wars are a pivotal event in the Star Wars saga, to which LucasArts are obviously keen to do justice as a videogame. With any luck this will prove to be a worthy follow-up to *Rogue Leader* (but don't count on it outselling *Mario* this time).



NGC VERDICT

It's definitely an ambitious project, and one that we're very keen to see realised to its fullest potential. The battle at the end of Episode II had us yelling and applauding in the cinema (and almost getting thrown out because the movie hadn't actually finished), so the chance to take part in it and influence its events is too good to mess up. Pandemic's previous game, *Battlezone*, was also very, very good on PC, so that's got to be a favourable omen. If we're a little worried about anything in particular, it's that the scale of the battles will have a major impact on the graphics. It looks nice, especially when you're down among the troops, but at the moment there's a lot of fogging to disguise the limited draw distance. We'll keep you posted.



UK WINTER | US AUTUMN | JAPAN TBA

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- Worlds with a little more scenery to them. The ones we've seen so far are a little barren – which presumably has something to do with keeping the game running at a decent frame-rate.
- You should have the opportunity to go monkey hunting on Kashyyyk and gun down Chewbacca's mother, thus changing the course of Star Wars history.

ANTICIPATION RATING

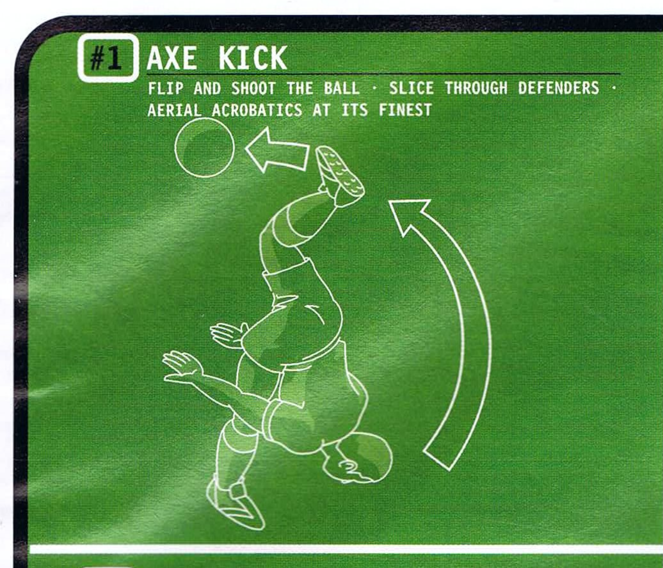


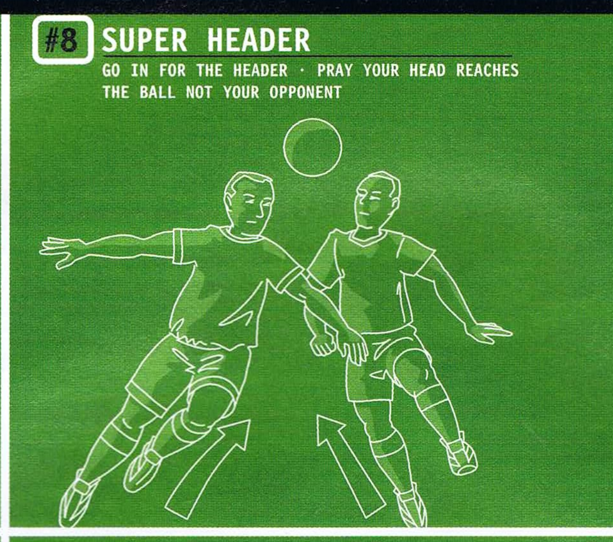


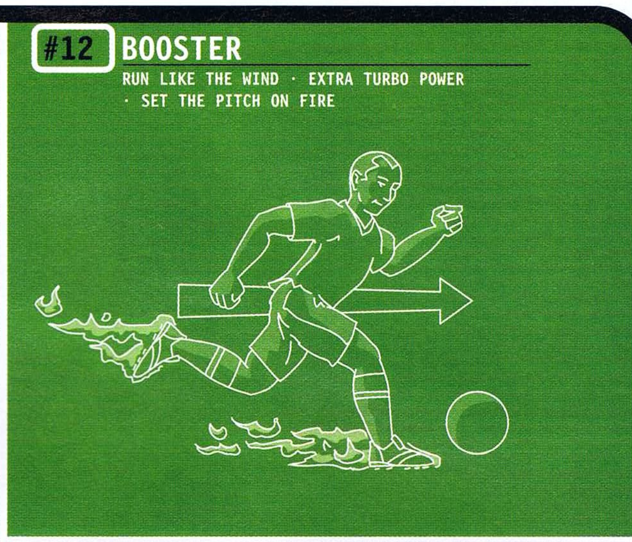

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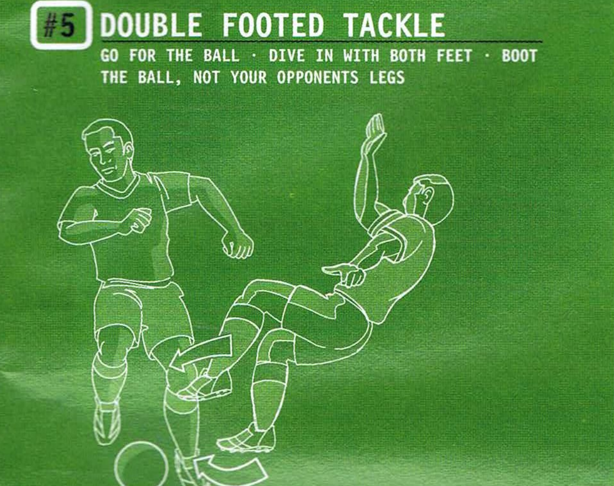


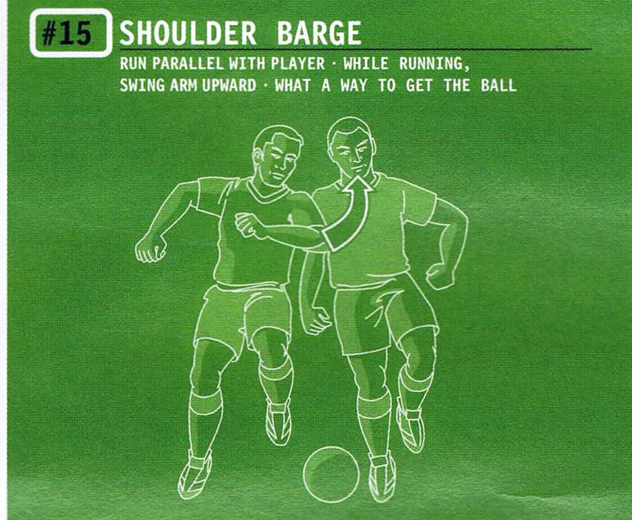
DID YOU KNOW? The original movie was going to be called Star Wars: The Adventures of Luke Starkiller.

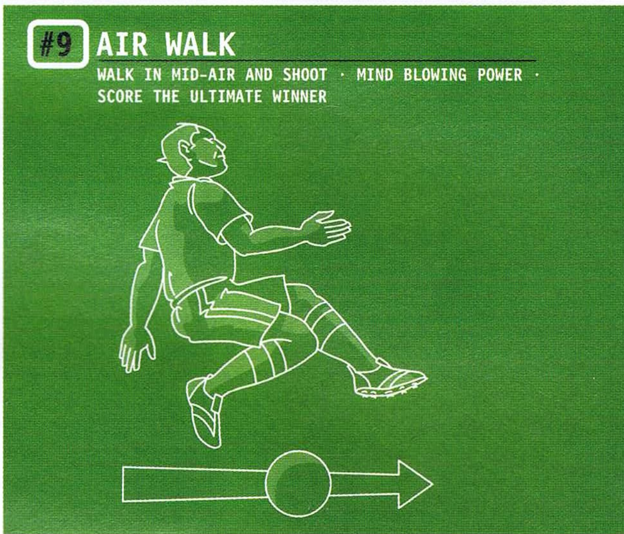


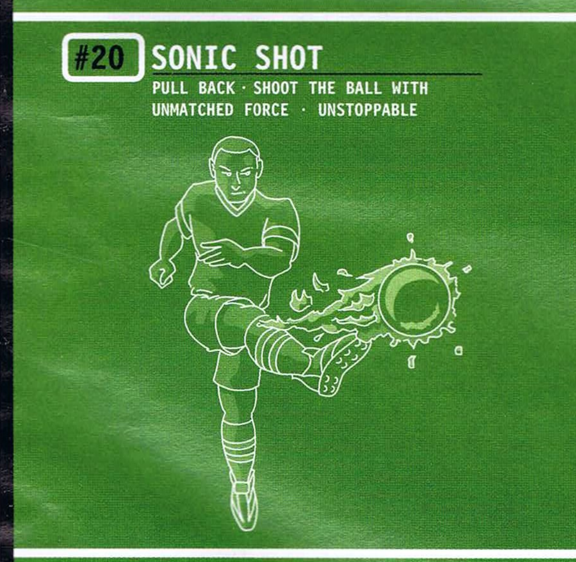


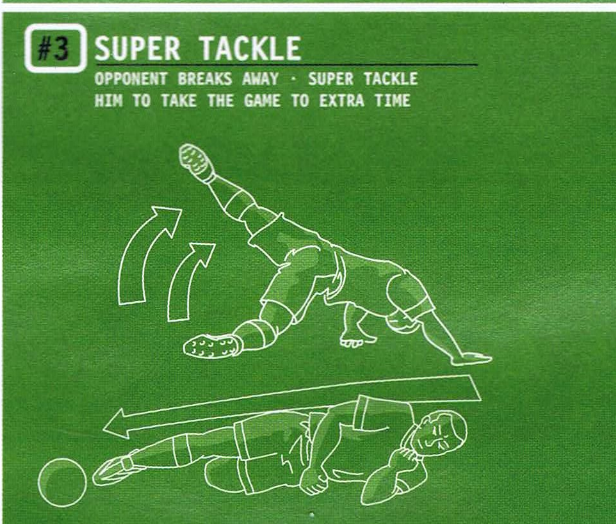


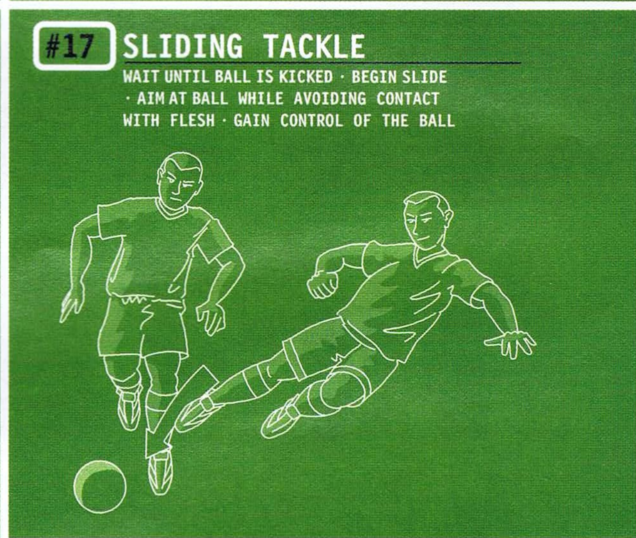








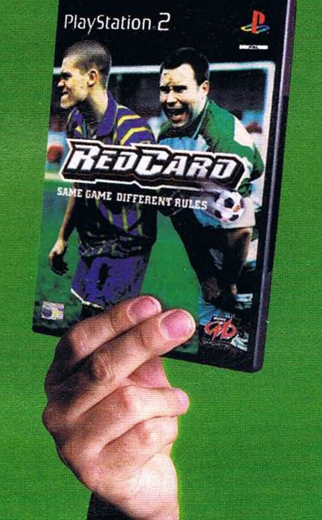






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THE KNOWLEDGE

- Follow-up to *Super Metroid* on the SNES, being put together in the States by developers Retro.
- First-person shooter, with unique in-helmet perspective.
- Curl up into a ball in order to access secret areas and tunnels.
- Brand-new storyline.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Turok: Dinosaur Hunter (NGC/1)**
  A few members of the *Metroid* team worked on the N64 classic.
- **Half-Life (PC, Dreamcast)**
  Again, some team members came up with this PC stunner.



△ Bugs come in all shapes and sizes: some crawl, some leap, some run. They've got one thing in common, though: they're all going to feel some red-hot death. Yeah!

METROID PRIME

WORLD EXCLUSIVE! Amazing new details and 44 incredible new shots direct from the US...





While you just knew *Mario* and *Zelda* would be superb in their new Gamecube guises, things weren't so clear-cut with *Metroid Prime*. Early shots and videos suggested a game that looked the part, but the big question was whether it could live up to the standard of the SNES original (one of the best side-scrolling platformers ever made), whether it could make the switch to 3D, and whether it could match its sparkling textures and level construction with inventive missions and smooth, rapid-fire gunnery. Last month's E3 gave us the answer – a very definite yes – and now further playtesting has revealed even more: that this game, so long weighed down by team problems, problems with Nintendo, release date slippage, redundancies and walkouts, is going to be one of Gamecube's very best.

An exaggeration? Forget that! *Metroid* is superb, so laden with great bits that there's almost too much to squeeze into the following six pages. Everything reeks of quality, from the smallest texture to the biggest boss, but even more impressive is the work Retro have done on remodelling the first-person shooter. The blueprint that the likes of *Half-Life*, *Turok* and *GoldenEye* worked from is still intact, but now there are extra bits bolted on, and intriguing new directions, not least the inclusion of the much-vaunted helmet view. This alone gives the game a unique and distinctive slant, but it's how it's actually implemented that really amazes – breath on the visor, facial reflections, blood dripping down as you blast a bug to bits, and that's just for starters. Everything in *Metroid Prime* starts from the visor: from here, you control everything Samus does, from rolling up into a ball, to firing off

> **"EVERYTHING IN METROID REEKS OF QUALITY FROM THE TINIEST TEXTURE TO THE BIGGEST BOSS"**

LET'S GO TO SCAN B

Take an exclusive trip inside Samus' helmet, as we discover what her new body suit can do...



■ The scanning element is hugely important to the *Metroid Prime* universe. Press L once and you bring up the magnifying strip (above), and anything scannable that passes through that strip will turn orange. Tap L again and hold it down and it'll lock on to the scannable object, giving you a breakdown of what it is. More interestingly, the scanner is used to help solve puzzles and sub-quests, spotting holograms and mini tunnels.

■ The helmet's thermal option has yet to be really seen, but plainly it will give you the chance to pinpoint enemies beyond walls.

■ Switch to X-ray and things go purple. Whereas infra-red picks out humans, X-ray is likely to aid you with more structural details.

■ Not a function as such, but delicious all the same: if something explodes close to you, Samus' face is reflected in the glass. Beaut.

weapons, to seeing through doors into other rooms, to scanning corpses for causes of death. This aspect alone is worth turning up for but, predictably, there's more too.

DEEP SPACE FINE

Right from the off, things are lovely: the menu screens feature bugs under an electron microscope – it's superbly done. Move into the game and you're presented with the sight of Samus rolling onto a space station, floating somewhere in deep space.

Many areas of the game are still shrouded in secrecy (including the plot), so whether this section will actually mark the start of the finished game remains to be seen, but it's littered with simple puzzles, almost like a training level, suggesting that it probably will be the beginning. For example, in order to get you used to targeting, you're required to turn off two force fields. Each force field has four switches – target the switches to turn off the force field. Once done, you can enter the interior complex.

The internal locations are brilliant: textures are detailed, music rumbles in the background, while sound effects, far off and ghostly, suggest things aren't quite as they seem. You soon realise why: they're not. If you want to see what happens next, turn the page to find out – our exclusive level walkthrough takes you from the first corridor to the first space pirate.

CIRCLE OF FIENDS

It's really after the first round of battles that you start to see how the helmet works. The key features – beyond the X-ray and thermal, which you'll only use occasionally – are the scanner and lock-on. Once you scan something, you can immediately lock on to it, and it's this element, more than any other, which is likely to divide fans of the first-person shooter. Because the game automatically locks on, and doesn't 'unlock' until the enemy is dead, you no longer have to circle strafe, a common feature among other games of the genre. Admittedly, you have to move to avoid the

STATIC!

Drift into the range of certain bugs or areas of the map you shouldn't and interference will adorn the inside of your helmet. Move back out and it'll disappear. Eh? Well, it's not clear from the sections we played why this happens exactly, but it seems some enemies have the ability to fuzz up your hi-tech body suit, perhaps through mind magic... or could it be that the helmet goes awry when Samus is running low on juice? We'll see...

TURN OVER
For an exclusive walkthrough of *Metroid Prime's* opening level – you won't see these shots anywhere else. ANYWHERE!

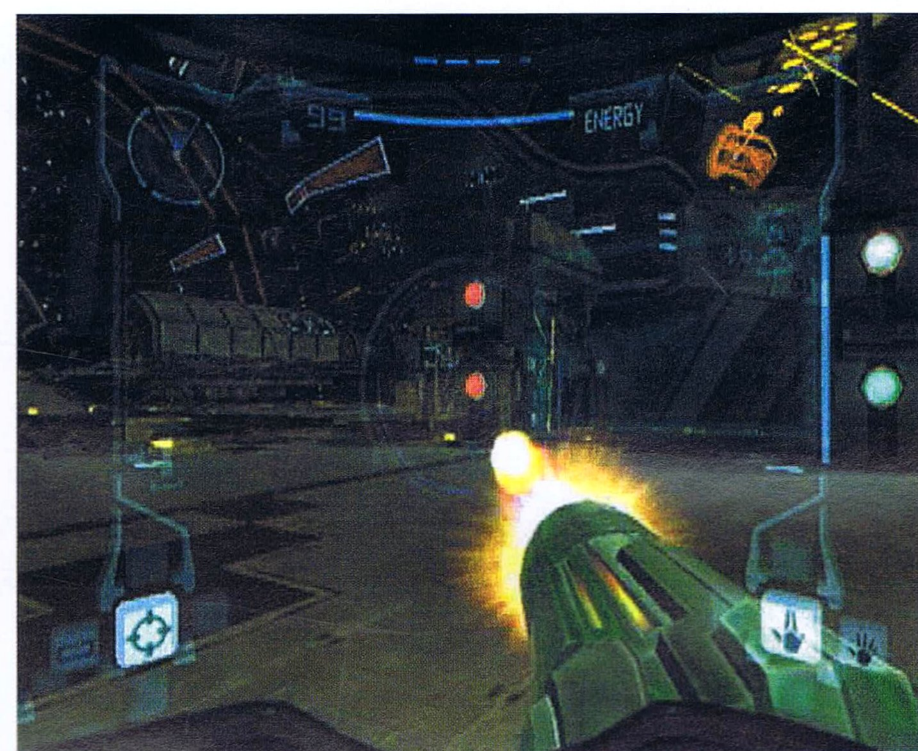
DID YOU KNOW? Samus might not be the only besuited beauty on Gamecube this year. Titus are rumoured to be bringing *Robocop* to the Cube before the end of 2002. Bob Morton made a mistake...



"*Metroid Prime* is going to be one of Gamecube's very best"







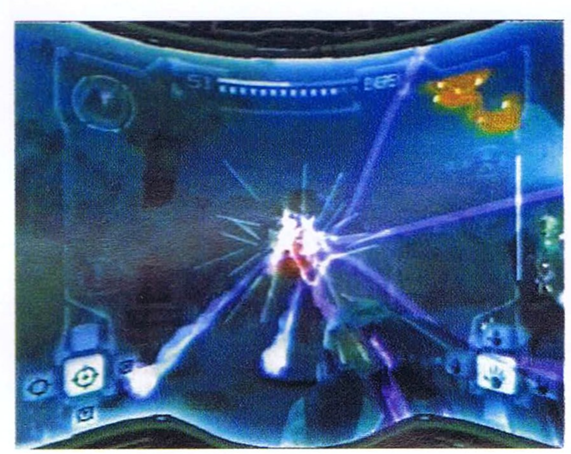
△ The locations and enemies in *Metroid Prime* are many and varied. This space station on the right is where your adventure starts. A real looker, eh?



START HERE!

△ Use the Scan Visor to check out areas that can be interacted with and used.

"IS METROID A SIMPLIFIED SHOOTER? SORT OF – BUT IT BRINGS ITS OWN IDEAS"



△ Unleash the laser and the effects are superb – just look at it!

NGC RUMOUR!

Sources suggest to us that Retro and Nintendo have plans afoot to link up *Metroid Prime* with GBA baby brother, *Metroid Fusion*. Keep 'em peeled...

fiery death being projected from your foes, but you never have to re-target, even when you take your eyes off them. The result is a game that's much easier to pick up than the likes of *GoldenEye* – a trait that's always marked out Nintendo games. But, unlike other Nintendo specials, like *Mario*, *Zelda* and *Smash Bros*, you don't really uncover any hidden depths in *Metroid*. What you see is what you get: there aren't any sneaky enemy attacks that attempt to get around the lock-on feature, and you don't need to discover any additional moves yourself because the lock-on works efficiently and quickly. It's odd, although we found it quite refreshing, but it undoubtedly strips away some of the tactics involved in taking down enemies. The same mechanics work for bosses too, as you'll see if you just slide your eyes across to the left here.

So, is *Metroid* a stripped down and simplified shooter? Sort of – but, as mentioned earlier, it also brings a few of its own ideas to the party. The helmet is chief among these, and the way the visor works, switching between modes and allowing you to perform more tasks than a Swiss Army Knife. But the biggest, and most unusual feature, has to be the way Samus can roll up into a ball in order to

BOSS!



The bosses in *Metroid* will have you bricking it good and proper, but they all have very definite weak points. Scanning is king, as once you've done that, you'll find the weak point and you'll immediately be offered a lock-on, enabling you to concentrate your fire on one particular section of the boss. Neat.

ALIEN NATION

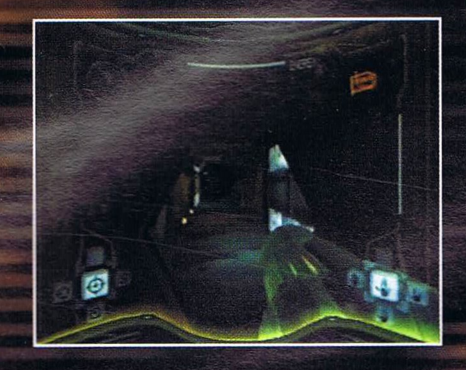
Despite the game's story being heavily weighted in favour of space pirates (along with Mother Brain, *the* reason Samus is on Tallon IV), they aren't the only extra-terrestrial you'll be filling full of laser death. Cockroach-like bugs adorn the opening sections of the games, while later on you're in for even tastier surprises, with slithering worms and scuttling spider-things.



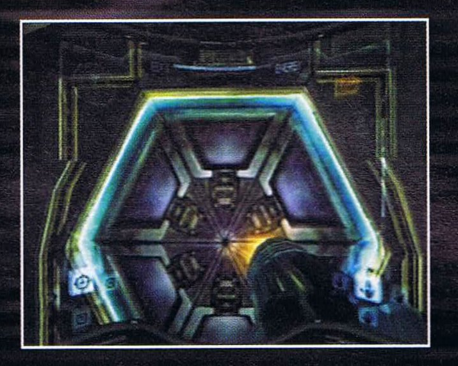


NO ORDINARY BUG HUNT

There are five first-person shooters out before Christmas, but only one gives you extra-terrestrial terror. Revel in the brilliance of *Metroid* in our exclusive level walkthrough…











SLIDING DOORS

Metroid Prime most definitely isn't about 'find a key, open a door'. New areas and secret sections are accessed via Samus' ball-rolling or, alternatively, just plain-old laser. Shooting doors opens them, simple as that, but if they *don't* open, you're required to use your scanner, a process that will identify why. From what we saw, most locked doors were opened in adjacent areas.















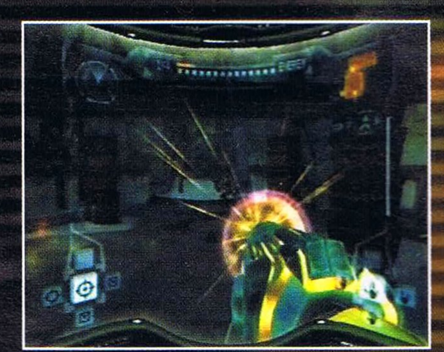
HAVING A BALL

There's a number of sections that can't be reached without rolling Samus up into her trademark ball. Progression in the game depends on it, in fact, as parts of the same level are often linked by Tallon IV's network of tunnels. Tap X and Samus gets spherical. Tap A while in a ball, and she can also drop bombs. Handy for when bugs start chasing you through the holes later in the game.

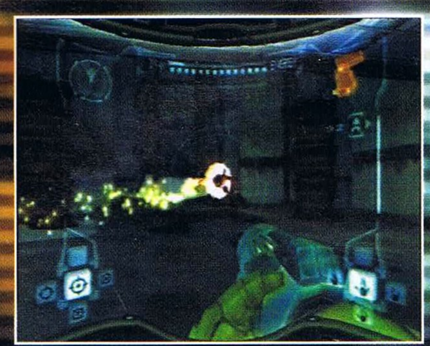




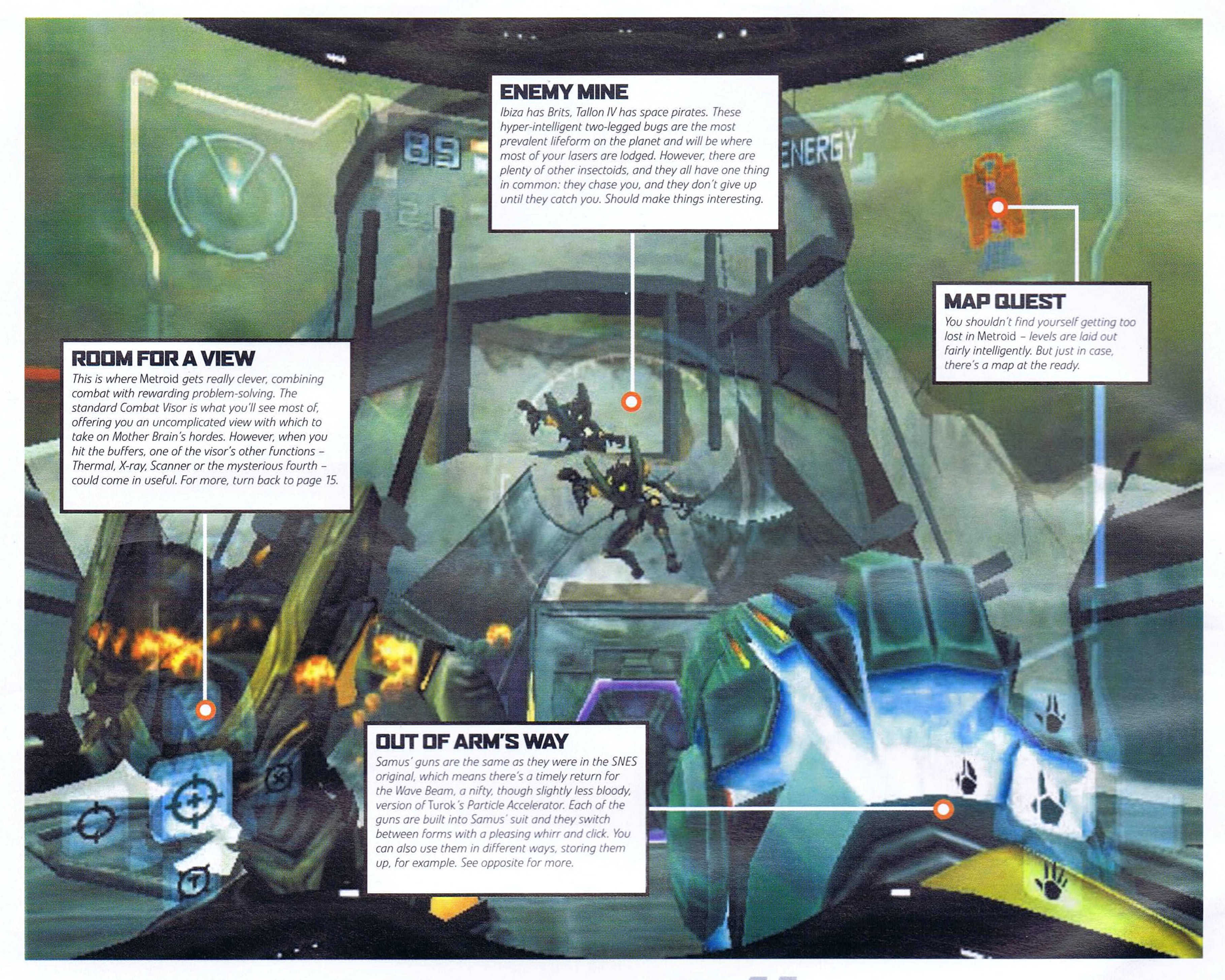








"It's scary, atmospheric, inventive and unique"



ENEMY MINE
Ibiza has Brits, Tallon IV has space pirates. These hyper-intelligent two-legged bugs are the most prevalent lifeform on the planet and will be where most of your lasers are lodged. However, there are plenty of other insectoids, and they all have one thing in common: they chase you, and they don't give up until they catch you. Should make things interesting.

MAP QUEST
You shouldn't find yourself getting too lost in Metroid *– levels are laid out fairly intelligently. But just in case, there's a map at the ready.*

ROOM FOR A VIEW
This is where Metroid *gets really clever, combining combat with rewarding problem-solving. The standard Combat Visor is what you'll see most of, offering you an uncomplicated view with which to take on Mother Brain's hordes. However, when you hit the buffers, one of the visor's other functions – Thermal, X-ray, Scanner or the mysterious fourth – could come in useful. For more, turn back to page 15.*

OUT OF ARM'S WAY
Samus' guns are the same as they were in the SNES original, which means there's a timely return for the Wave Beam, a nifty, though slightly less bloody, version of Turok's Particle Accelerator. Each of the guns are built into Samus' suit and they switch between forms with a pleasing whirr and click. You can also use them in different ways, storing them up, for example. See opposite for more.

negotiate tubular corridors. Push X and you'll whizz back out of the in-helmet view to a third-person perspective, where Samus will then roll up into a ball. Most likely you will use this feature where appropriately shaped corridors appear – however, many of them are blocked off. Which is where her handy collection of bombs come in: press A and you'll lay a bomb which'll then explode, opening up the previously closed-off section. Handy.

TUNNEL OF SHOVE

Launch Samus into one of these tunnels and you can then direct her from one section of the level to another. In practice, this process isn't particularly exciting as the space you're restricted to really just means you're pushing left or right, but you soon discover that her ball-rolling comes in useful in more open areas of the game too. Laying bombs flips her up, and this can be used to negotiate otherwise inaccessible platform sections. This idea also extends to other areas of the game: there are countless half-pipes dotted about, for example – one we played, covered in a layer of snow, required you to roll up and down the U-bend in order to gain speed. Once you had the necessary speed, you could launch yourself to a higher level where new areas and goodies awaited.

"THE MEAT OF THE GAME ISN'T THE BALL OR THE VISOR BUT BUG-OBLITERATING VIOLENCE"

But that's not all: her ball-rolling can be used for more practical purposes too. At one point, you're trapped in an airlock; it's not immediately obvious how you get out. Then you realise the switch for the airlock is weight-sensitive and, in order to get out, you need to roll into a ball and position yourself on the tip of a bump in the middle of the floor. Once done, you open up the airlock and Samus rolls back out of a ball. No first-person shooter has ever really perplexed players with clever puzzles, and *Metroid* isn't about to start. But it does make you think, and it uses its unique features cleverly throughout.

GUNNING FOR GORY

The real meat of the game, though, isn't the ball-rolling, or the functions of the visor, or the puzzles, but the bug-obliterating violence. And there's

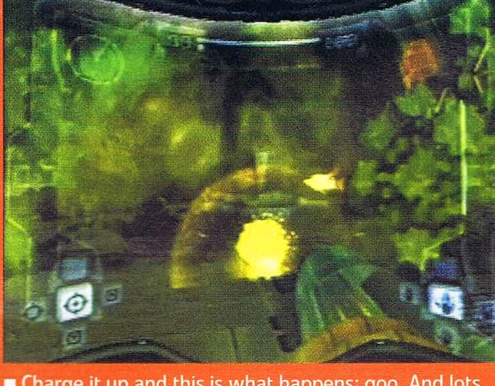
JOKE! Samus walks into a bar and bumps into an old friend of hers. He says: "You look great in that chrome suit. That must have set you back a bit." Samus nods. "Yeah, it did," she says. "It cost an armour'n leg." No? Anyone?

SHOOT, RATTLE AND ROLL

You've seen what her visor can do, now get the rest…



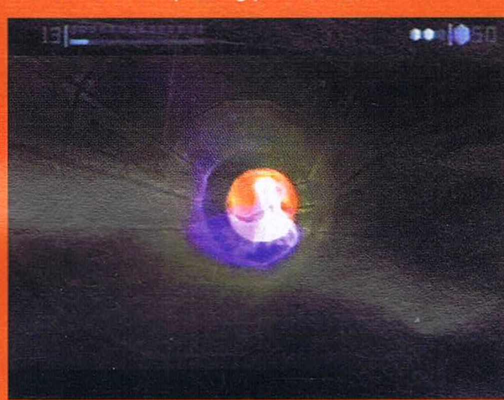
■ *Metroid's* control system is simple, and selecting weapons is a good example of this: pushing the C-stick will scroll through and select the weapon variant you're after; pressing A will fire it. You can also hold down A to charge the gun up, like in *Turok*.



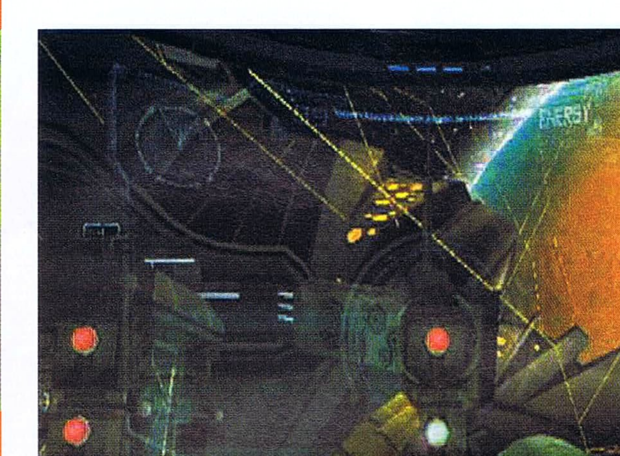
■ Charge it up and this is what happens: goo. And lots of it. There might not be a whole lot of human life on Tallon IV, but there are bugs – hit them with a charged-up body blow and they'll kindly scatter themselves over a pleasingly wide area.



■ Once you've wiped the muck off your helmet, you can start experimenting with the missiles Samus has packed away in her suit. Via the Y-button, you can fire off five missiles, one after the other, or (like the more traditional gun) hold down Y and charge 'em up.



■ Guns aren't much good for the tight areas, though, and that's where Samus' rolling feature comes in. Pushing X rolls her up into a ball, meaning you can then traverse corridors like the one above, which often link different parts of the same level. Neato!



△ Samus' hand is often used to steady the gun. Clever.

VIEW TO A KILL! So what of Samus' rumoured third-person mode, that allows her to go out-of-suit to look around? We can exclusively reveal: rubbish!

△ The suit really is the key area in *Metroid* – everything unfolds from there.







△ At the beginning of the game, Samus (left) rises from a ball in this funky cut-scene, strutting her armour-plated stuff. The first level (centre) is the space station. Once you've negotiated this, you're on to the interior (right) and these skin-crawlers…

PLOT!

Metroid's background story is still being kept under wraps at Retro – most likely because they're planning a twist to echo the SNES original – but what's certain is that what Samus finds on Tallon IV ain't nice and it ain't human. Nintendo have described the end as a "big, big surprise". Interesting.

plenty of it. After a slow start, you're soon working your way through a world packed with enemies. The first level features bugs with head cavities full of rat turd: you can out-gun and out-think them even if you have no gaming skills whatsoever, but the further you get into the game, the harder they become until, about halfway through, the space pirates are ducking, diving and even chasing after you. The latter, in particular, is a really distressing experience: not only does it send the willies down your spine, but your lock-on becomes less effective *because you're can't lock on to them they're moving so fast*. The bugs also get noticeably larger – Retro can handle their graphics, and at points we were having to see off a whole army of insect evil-doers.

SCREAM TOO

There's certainly a stack more to do on *Metroid* before it hits US shores around November, but what we've seen and played really is superb. It's scary, atmospheric, inventive and unique, and although we've certainly got some tiny 'issues' with some of the game's features (most notably the lock-on) there's no doubt this is going to be a thrill-a-minute ride, packed to the rafters with standout moments only Nintendo can deliver.

We'll be keeping you up to date.

NGC VERDICT



We've seen and played a hell of a lot of *Metroid* already and what we're seeing is brilliant: the influence of Nintendo is obvious, but Retro must take heaps of credit for the way they're slowly turning this into a choice piece of blasting. The visor view is inspired, adding unique and challenging new directions to the gameplay, while the level structure and the enemies that fill them are incredible. One or two features need to be addressed, notably the amount of assistance the lock-on gives you, but otherwise we can confidently predict that, come Christmas, this will be top of your shopping list. The brave step from 2D to 3D has already paid off – we're keeping our fingers crossed that this will continue to get better and better. You'll find out for sure in NGC…

UK	US	JAPAN
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WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- Blood. Okay, it's not the be-all-and-end-all, but a bit of claret wouldn't go amiss.
- Human enemies. We've been playing *Metroid* for ages, but there's no sign of any humans foes… yet. Keep 'em crossed.
- An end-of-game twist. We reckon this is in the offing, anyway, but it can't do any harm to let Retro know – *we want to see a similar surprise to the SNES original.*

ANTICIPATION RATING

5



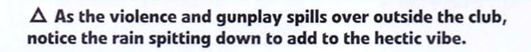
Travelling through time has given the designers a huge palette to draw from when creating the game's enemies – although we have to say these square-headed robots from the future look more comical than fearsome.

THE KNOWLEDGE

- Sequel to best-selling PS2 title, coded by Free Radical Design, whose members previously worked on *GoldenEye*.
- First-person shooter action.
- Game sees you taking on foes at different points in time.
- A Mapmaker mode letting you design your own levels.
- Multiplayer mode includes both adversarial and co-operative modes for up to four.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **GoldenEye (NGC/9)** Genius first-person shooter that's brilliant even now.
- **Timesplitters (PlayStation 2)** Great multiplayer game, wafer thin one-player option.



As the violence and gunplay spills over outside the club, notice the rain spitting down to add to the hectic vibe.



You've got yourself a gun, now get yourself some fun: don't be fooled into thinking these smart foes want to chat.

TIMESPLITTERS 2

Travel through time with the first-person shooter that's very much the grandson of *GoldenEye*...





Now that shooters of the first person variety are more ubiquitous than annoying Big Brother housemates, you could forgive us for being just a tad cynical when we had the chance to play another at last month's E3. Within seconds of picking up a joypad and entering the world of *Timesplitters 2*, though, we were forced to chow down on some very large slices of humble pie. From the get-go things just felt *right* – not surprising, perhaps, when you consider most of the coders housed in Free Radical Design's Nottingham HQ are veterans of Rare's mighty N64 empire; and, more importantly, old hands at this genre having plied their trade on arguably the outfit's greatest achievement: *GoldenEye*. And surely there's no better pedigree for producing a Gamecube first-person shooter than that unmitigated classic.

Timesplitters 2's plot isn't anything to write home about, but as Free Rad are keen to point out, plot isn't really that important in a shooter. Instead, the time-traversing back story is really just an excuse to let you jump between nine different eras, including tumbleweed-strewn Wild West towns and soulless Cold War-style bunkers, blasting everything in sight to bits.

Not only does this time-specific eye candy ensure a real sense of progress as you journey through the game –

ASSETS!



Where other first-person shooters are content to populate their levels with an endless stream of faceless goons, *Timesplitters 2* raises the stakes with a superb array of characters. As well as the besuited gangsters, we were especially taken by this buxom girl here. You know, because of her personality.

SNOW JOKE

As you traverse through time you'll notice particularly impressive attention to detail on all the levels. Here in deepest Siberia you'll witness snow gently fall and swirl around in the wind as you attempt to infiltrate an enemy base, while other levels include brilliantly done boiling water.

COLD AS ICE

As a sly nod to their past achievements, the team behind Timesplitters 2 *have included a Siberian level very reminiscent of* GoldenEye. *However, to show that it's not just a rehash, check out the improved sniper system shown below. Zooming in for head shots has never been this much fun...*

BIG GUNS

As befits any modern first-person shooter, there's a bewildering array of bang sticks available to pick up and play with on your mission. Due to the time-travelling nature of the game, this is often specific to the era you're in, ranging from high-tech lasers in the future to good old-fashioned cold steel.

AN ANIMATED TYPE OF GUY

Take a moment to watch your victims after you've just increased the lead intake in their daily diet and you'll see them go through some very slick animation sequences. This is due to the use of 'inverse kinetics'. Erm, we think. To be honest, we couldn't give a rat's what it's called – it looks absolutely startling.

there are no environments made up of endless warehouses here – but it has allowed the designers to instil a real sense of character in the game. Mingling with shady besuited types in a 1930s Chicago club one minute and then experiencing the claustrophobia of an underground tunnel network the next really delivers a sense of individuality and invention to the title.

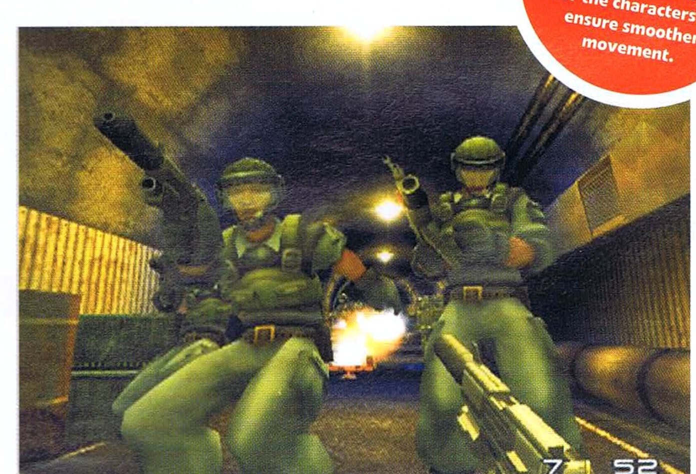
Just as *GoldenEye* raised the bar for this type of game by allowing you to personalise your attacks with head, knee, or even excruciatingly painful groin shots, *Timesplitters 2* similarly takes things up a notch on a number of levels. As you tip-toe around the nine different game episodes, you'll be witness to an incredible level of background detail: liquids boil, flames flicker, snow falls softly and stray shots cause sparks to fly when they graze past metal. Of course, you can

> **"THERE'S AN INCREDIBLE LEVEL OF DETAIL: LIQUIDS BOIL, STRAY SHOTS CAUSE SPARKS TO FLY"**

BURN!



If you've read our *Turok Evolution* preview on page 34, then you'll know how impressed we were with those fire effects. Well, these are pretty good too – especially the way your enemies curl up into a ball... like that's going to be any use when you're warmer than a chicken tandoori. Beautiful.



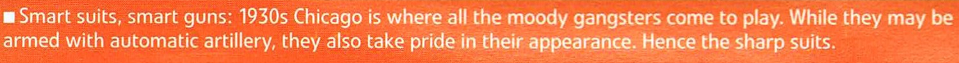
SMOOTH For *Timesplitters 2* the design team completely rebuilt the original animation models for the characters to ensure smoother movement.

"The co-operative mode promises to be a real bonus"

TURN BACK TIME

As if you hadn't guessed from its name, *Timesplitters 2* sees you travelling through time to take on the bad guys. Much like Quantum Leap. Just without that Al guy.





■ Smart suits, smart guns: 1930s Chicago is where all the moody gangsters come to play. While they may be armed with automatic artillery, they also take pride in their appearance. Hence the sharp suits.



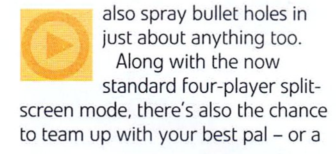
■ Things go medieval. But you've still got the shotgun to deal 'em in.



■ Go deep underground as you join in all the fun of the Cold War.



■ Future-set levels feature a collection of Johnny Fives.



also spray bullet holes in just about anything too. Along with the now standard four-player split-screen mode, there's also the chance to team up with your best pal – or a talented enemy – and travel through time together in the co-operative mode. This promises to be a real bonus: co-operative modes are rarely done well, but when they *are* pulled off – such as in *Perfect Dark* – they're a brilliant addition to the standard modes. Hopefully, you'll still be able to 'accidentally' shoot your compadre in the back for top comic effect, too.

If that's not enough to satiate your creative appetite, the Mapmaker will enable you to create your own levels. This was a superb function in the original – you could create a massive, playable arena in a couple of minutes – and with new pieces and added textures, promises to be even better.

"ONE OF THE BEST FEATURES IS THE MAPMAKER WHERE YOU CAN CREATE YOUR OWN LEVELS"

From our playtest it's obvious this feels a lot like Rare's Bond masterpiece, both in terms of control (using the C-stick to aim) and general interface. Some of the levels are remarkably similar too, but that's hardly a bad thing. In fact, even if *Timesplitters 2* emerged as nothing more than a 'tribute' to *GoldenEye* – which it won't – it would be difficult to complain. As it is, though, you can rest assured this super-sequel has enough party tricks and clever touches of its own tacked on to aid it in its quest to be number one come September. More soon…

MEMORY SPACE

By the time, er, *Timesplitters 2* arrives, Nintendo should have released their larger memory card – just the job for those maps!



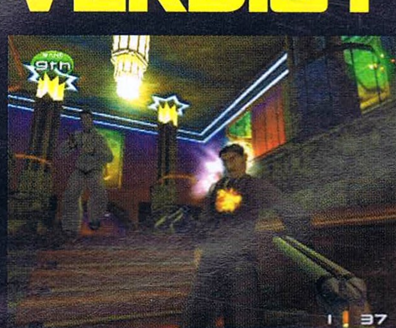
△ We love a party with a happy atmosphere. And double-barrel shotguns. And you've got to admit, it sure beats small talk over a plate of smoked-salmon crepes.



△ See the monkey? We're not sure how integral to the plot the cheeky little chap is, but it's always nice to know that it's not just humans you can torch. Eh, Kittsy?

NGC VERDICT

Having spent some time with the multiplayer mode, it looks like *Timesplitters 2* could be the finest four-player shooter of them all. *GoldenEye* was, and still is, one of the finest examples of four-player gaming, and a game influenced by this – but with Gamecube's greater power – has got to be brilliant. But, unlike the first game, this has much more to offer than just a top-notch multiplayer: the solo-player mode – which was ludicrously easy in the first game – has been beefed up too, with more challenge and more freedom, and the inclusion of the co-operative mode will make a superb addition too. Chuck in the Mapmaker and you've got a potentially dazzling all-rounder…



UK	US	JAPAN
SEPT	SEPT	UNLIKELY

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- How about speech that includes slang terms relevant to the time of the level?
- Body sensitive animations, so that shoulder shots see the victim wince in a different manner to leg shots.
- Multiple routes through the nine levels to tie in with the option of either shooting your way through a level or completing it in a stealth-like manner.

ANTICIPATION RATING










THE KNOWLEDGE

- Link returns in another free-roaming adventure – this time there's no Ganondorf (or is there?) and he's out to save his sister. And the world, plainly.
- Jaw-dropping cel-shaded visuals and some truly gob-smacking animation.
- Slick, intuitive control system for instantly accessible play.
- Sail boats from island to island, interacting with characters and exploring frightening dungeons.
- Loads of minigames, including barrel jumping and, um, pig chasing.
- Cheeky homages to *Metal Gear Solid*, including sneaking through tunnels.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Zelda: Ocarina of Time (NGC/23)**
  Awesome adventure game – probably Nintendo's best ever.
- **Zelda: Majora's Mask (NGC/49)**
  Genius follow-up with little Link battling the evil Skull Kid.



△ That lovely grass can be chopped down in seconds, thanks to Link's improved spin attack. It's doubtful Mr Angry here is taken with the idea, mind.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

NGC ON THE DVD

From best game ever to the best-*looking* game ever! Nintendo go from strength to strength once again…



Fair play to Shigsy. We hate to say we were right in **NGC**/68, but, well, we were. Not only did we predict that he'd put a stop to all the whinging and whining about 'Celda', but we also reckoned he'd create a brilliant new adventure. And so he has, sticking two fingers up at anyone who thought that Nintendo had lost the plot in the process. Him and his team have, in no uncertain terms, created the first 'proper', fully interactive cartoon. Forget *Dragon's Lair*, this is something else – a brave new era.

Chances are you'll already have gawped at the footage of Nintendo's latest masterpiece on our exclusive DVD. If you have you'll be aware that you *really* have to see this game in motion before you can fully appreciate just how delightful *The Legend of Zelda* actually is. Despite its seemingly simple design, Link's latest adventure truly excels itself in terms of sheer visual polish. The overall design is super-sharp, unbelievably crisp and clean, and stylised to the point that it takes the series into hitherto unseen realms of beauty. But, as we've so often said, the game's real triumph is the way the character models and environments interact with each other. Thanks to Nintendo's decision to shy away from the 'realistic' approach to *Zelda*, everything in the game has a consistent sense of belonging in relation to each other. The way Link strikes enemies, the way the boat leaves gorgeous, pulsing cel-shaded ripples in its wake and the way Link sidles along walls before peeking into the gloomy three-tone darkness,

> **"LINK'S LATEST ADVENTURE TRULY EXCELS ITSELF IN TERMS OF VISUAL QUALITY"**



DID YOU KNOW? This wasn't the only Zelda game that courted controversy. *Zelda: The Adventure of Link* was also unpopular because of its side-on perspective. Plus ça change…



△ Now that's got to hurt. Looks like old Linkey boy's been packing firecrackers in his scabbard.



△ Link's mini-spin attack returns too.



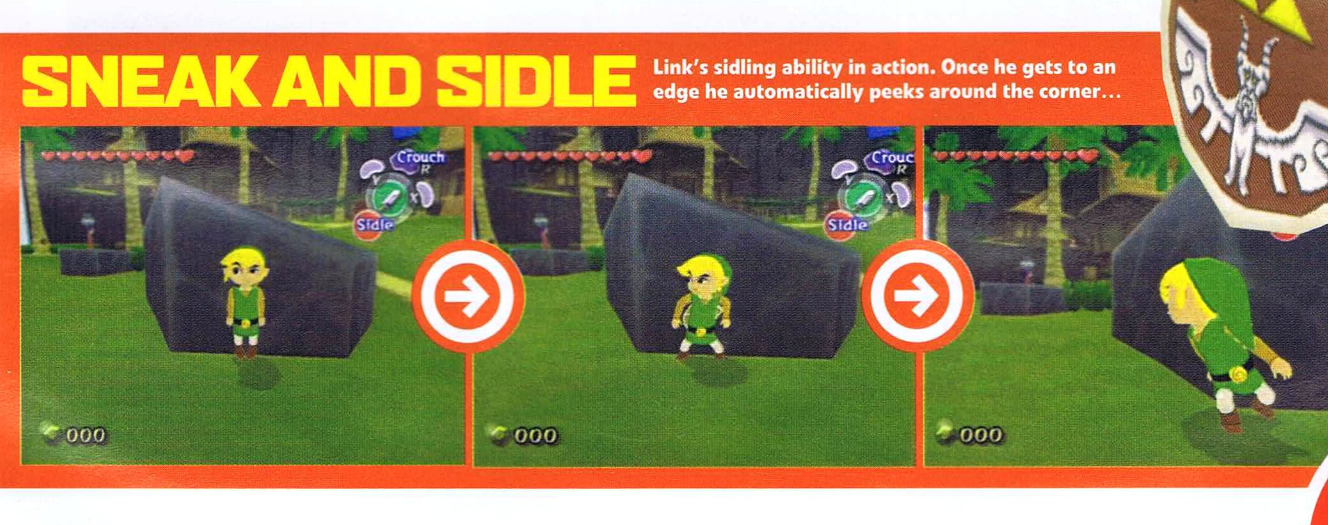
△ Get knocked off this and you die.



△ Swinging is a simple skill to learn.

SNEAK AND SIDLE

Link's sidling ability in action. Once he gets to an edge he automatically peeks around the corner...



RUMOUR
Word on 'the street' is that many characters from past *Zelda* games will make cameo appearances in this latest installment, very much like the cast of *Ocarina of Time* did in *Majora's Mask*. Keep those peepers peeled!

everything is remarkably convincing when it comes to conveying that sense that you're temporarily inhabiting a magical new landscape.

Anyway, enough gushing over the graphics – you can see all that for yourself in the screenshots and DVD footage. It's the way the game plays that Shigsy really wanted to demonstrate, and who are we to argue with the man himself?

Firstly, all that stuff about *The Legend of Zelda* playing like a well-oiled and superbly refined evolution of *Ocarina of Time* is perfectly justified. In many ways, guiding Link around the environments feels very similar to the N64 classic. The auto-jump, for example, is still intact, as is the lock-on circle-strafing function (accessed by clicking the left shoulder-button). Link's basic attacking moves also seem surprisingly similar to both N64 games, with his vertical, horizontal and jump-in strikes all remaining essentially the same as before – at least in terms of the way they look and their effectiveness in combat. The biggest change to Link's 'familiar' attacks is the beefing up of his charged sword attack. Now, instead of just swooshing round with a glowing trail, Link charges up before going what can only described as 'ape'. Once fully charged, he has about five seconds' worth of crazy spinning time as he tornadoes his way through anything in his path. Best of all, he can be guided around as he does so. The only disadvantage we can see is that by charging himself up as far as he'll go, he gets all dizzy once the move ends, and has to stay still while he regains his breath – making him vulnerable in the process.

Of course, it's not just a rehashing of all the old skills. Link also has a clutch of new moves at his disposal, and no doubt many more that have yet to be revealed. The first one we witnessed was revealed courtesy of Shigsy himself at Nintendo's pre-E3 press conference (even if he did

EYE EYE!



One of first things Shigsy changed after Spaceworld was Link's eyes – they were pretty darn good before, but the range of expression and movement in them now is simply awesome. Leave Link idle for a while and you'll be alarmed at how much character his face shows – the little charmer.

YOUR ZELDA FAQS AT A GLANCE

Your mail's been flooding in since E3 so, just for you, we'll answer the top questions of the month…









1 WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THE CEL-SHADING MAKE TO THE GAMEPLAY?

Honestly? Not much. It feels very much like *Ocarina of Time*. the way Link runs, jumps and attacks isn't exactly the same, but it's all very familiar. It's also worth remembering that there were only five levels on offer at E3 and so it's highly likely that there's plenty left to surprise us.

2 HOW IS THE GAME STRUCTURED? WILL IT BE TOTALLY FREE-ROAMING?

Nintendo weren't giving much away where the actual structure was concerned. From what we can gather, rather than having a huge expanse such as Hyrule Field to traverse, Link will travel between islands by boat and each island will be pretty large with plenty of caves and dungeons to explore.

3 I HEARD YOU CAN CHOOSE THE PICK-UPS YOU GET FROM FALLEN ENEMIES…

You can, but it's not as simple as that. When you defeat an enemy they can leave spheres that cycle through different colours. To get the pick-up you need you have to strike the sphere with your sword at the right time. If you're good enough you'll be able to get hearts when you need them.

4 WILL NAVI BE MAKING AN APPEARANCE?

Not from what we saw, unfortunately. But it seems Link will have a guide of sorts in the form of a gem that bestows him with hints and tips as he progresses. One of the best uses Navi had was her ability to draw your attention to interesting objects and environmental features. It's unclear whether anything else will take Navi's place.









5 WHAT ABOUT EPONA? WILL WE GET TO RIDE HER AGAIN?

Again, we didn't see her turn up in the E3 demo – a likely reason could be because Link's longer journeys take him across the ocean between islands, rather than over land, so it's unlikely that she'll actually be needed as much as in previous adventures. Still, anything's possible, of course, and it'd be a real shame for her to left out of the game altogether.

6 WILL WE GET FULL IN-GAME SPEECH IN GAME THIS TIME?

No. It's entirely text based, peppered with the odd sample here and there. As far as we're concerned this is a good thing, as there's nothing worse than having your involvement in the game's overall atmosphere ruined by some idiot with poor voice-acting skills. Anyone who's played the English version of *Shenmue*, or Rare's *Starfox Adventures* (well, the E3 version, anyway) will testify to that.

7 IT'S NOT GOING TO BE ANOTHER SHORT GAME IS IT?

Extremely unlikely. Many areas we played in the demo were quite large, though judging from their difficulty it would be fair to assume they were earlier sections of the game. With this in mind, it's highly probable that there are some huge expanses of land and sprawling dungeons further through the game. And anyway, when was the last time you played a painfully short *Zelda* game?

8 HOW DOES ALL THIS STEALTH-BASED PLAY WORK, THEN?

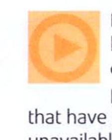
You can hide in shadows, tiptoe around, sidle up against walls and peek round corners to check the coast is clear. You can also hide under barrels and move around Solid Snake-style, but be aware if any guards are looking your way – if they catch the barrel moving, they'll come over, smash it open and throw you in jail. You'll also have searchlights to contend with.



△ As you can see from the light, despite the cel-shaded visuals, *Zelda* loses nothing in its atmospheric intensity.



△ Every time Link strikes the bird, feathers explode out and float gently down. Definitely one of the sweeter animations.



fluff it towards the end, bless him). After defeating certain enemies, Link can pick up dropped weapons that have functions otherwise unavailable to him. In the case of Shigsy's example, Link picked up a heavy club-type implement that he needed to utilise in order to smash through a wooden blockade that his sword was unable to break.

What this means is that there's another dimension of puzzle solving to take into account when attempting to progress through dungeons. On top of this, Link can now shimmy across any ledges too precarious to walk across, or sidle against walls before peeking around them for extra stealth. Aside from this, he now has the ability to swing on ropes to reach faraway platforms and hide under barrels to avoid detection.

> "LINK CAN NOW SHIMMY ACROSS ANY LEDGES THAT LOOK TOO PRECARIOUS TO WALK ACROSS"

Furthermore, Link's swimming abilities have been tweaked. Now, when he enters the water he can only

DID YOU KNOW? That, not counting those awful, awful CD-i adventures and blasphemous cartoons, this will in fact be Link's ninth adventure.

Exclusive shots of Nintendo's new adventure





△ Get caught by the guards and you'll have to escape through the tunnels.



△ If you must dip your piles in lava, expect eye-watering butt-pain.



△ Go on, son. Charge her up and let rip!



△ Defeated enemies leave pick-ups behind.



△ "And when you're done mowing the lawn, you can practice your Ocarina!"



△ He might be a world-saving hero, but a bufty quiff like that ain't gonna help him with the ladies – unless they want their tiles polished.



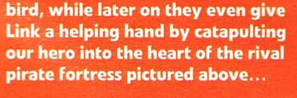
△ This bird here seems to like snatching away young ladies.

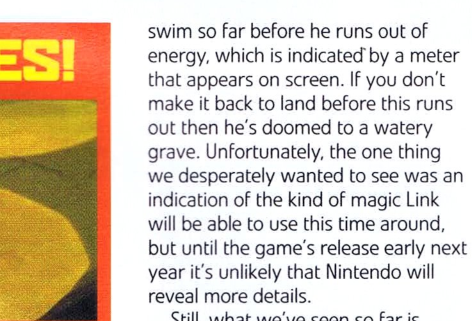


△ See, even the icon system has all the familiar functions. You'll feel right at home here.

CONFIRMED! The overall size of the maps won't be on as grand a scale as in previous games – however, the sheer wealth of supporting characters, side quests, puzzles and extras will make the game feel more vibrant and engaging than ever before. We wouldn't expect any less of course...

PIRATES!





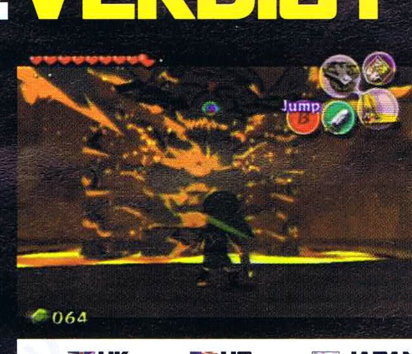
Pirates feature very heavily in the new *Zelda* – but they're not always Link's enemies. In one instance, Link helps them rescue a young girl from the clutches of a mysterious bird, while later on they even give Link a helping hand by catapulting our hero into the heart of the rival pirate fortress pictured above...

swim so far before he runs out of energy, which is indicated by a meter that appears on screen. If you don't make it back to land before this runs out then he's doomed to a watery grave. Unfortunately, the one thing we desperately wanted to see was an indication of the kind of magic Link will be able to use this time around, but until the game's release early next year it's unlikely that Nintendo will reveal more details.

Still, what we've seen so far is ample for the time being. The naysayers have been silenced and *just* enough info has been released to quash any concerns gamers had about the latest in the series not living up to some ludicrously high expectations. The only thing that was sorely lacking from E3 was any indication as to how each playable area sat in the grand scheme of things. It was very difficult to ascertain – probably intentionally – where players were in relation to the other levels, but we suppose this is perfectly forgivable – after all, we'd probably be the first to complain if too many surprises were given away.

At the end of the day, it's clear that Shigeru Miyamoto and co are making great ground when it comes to delivering exactly what we always wanted – an adventure that's beautiful, beguiling and great to play – and for that we're eternally grateful. Welcome back, Link.





Our opinion has changed little from last month. This is still number one on our Gamecube must-have list, and the more we see the more excited we get. The best thing of all, though, is that we know there's so much left to surprise us. Shigsy always keeps the best bits and most innovative ideas secret until the very last possible minute so that no one half-inches them. Essentially, then, what you've seen so far has only scratched the surface. There'll be loads more giant bosses, inventive gameplay styles, minigames, fantastic landscapes, magic, awe-inspiring set-pieces and other amazing visual trickery we couldn't possibly imagine right now. And we'll be there to grab news of 'em first. More soon.

UK	US	JAPAN
SPRING 03	SPRING 03	SPRING 03

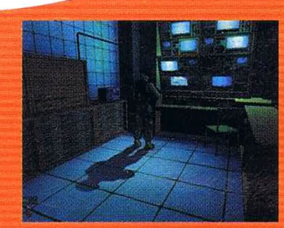
WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- A good plot. We know Nintendo haven't disappointed us in the past – but so far the new storyline seems to retread a lot of old ground, with plenty of clichés too.
- Some screen-saturating special magic attacks that devastate the landscape and wreak havoc on the enemy.
- Some kind of air-based travel, like the sections with the owl in *OOT*.

ANTICIPATION RATING





THE KNOWLEDGE

- The world's first cel-shaded first-person shooter. Apparently.
- Complex, involving story based on the classic comic book by Belgian writer Jean Van Hamme.
- Uses the *Unreal II* engine.
- A massive arsenal including shotguns, sniper rifles and 'stealth weapons', like knives.
- Interactive scenery – you can pick up things that are lying around and use them on foes.
- Enemies are blessed with some 'incredible' artificial intelligence.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Disney's Tarzan Freeride (NGC/67)** Actually *okay* third-person adventure with the ape boy.
- **Rayman 2 (NGC/34)** Popular platform pap with rubbish French cartoon buffoon.

△ **The visuals are plainly the standout feature of *XIII*, but the gameplay promises some interesting innovations too. XIII's sixth sense – that's XIII the man, not *XIII* the game – should help distance this from the likes of *GoldenEye*, while *XIII*'s interactable scenery – that's *XIII* the game, not... oh, who cares – will provide some interesting deaths.**

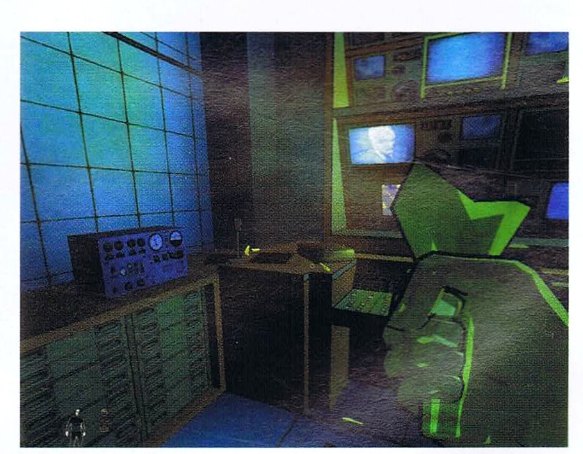


XIII









△ **Broken bottles. Brings new meaning to the word 'jaggies'.**

The first of its kind: a cel-shaded first-person shooter. But will *XIII* make a bang in '03?



Ubi Soft claim *XIII* is the only cel-shaded first-person shooter in the world. But this ain't no one-trick pony. Along with the startling look of the game, the French coders are promising a raft of innovative new features, including the ability to pick up inanimate objects that are lying about and use them as weapons, and an interesting 'sixth sense', which enables the main character to predict when and where enemies will attack.

The beginning of the game sees you washed up on a beach with the number XIII tattooed on your left shoulder. You don't remember your name, you don't remember anything about your previous life – however, it soon becomes apparent that you match the description of a man the CIA are looking for in connection with the assassination of the US President.

The comics the game is based on – providing you spoke French – threw up more twists and turns than a mountain pass, and the plot of the game, lifted directly from Belgian scribbler Jean Van Hamme's original storyline, promises to do the same, eventually revealing the hows and

TWISTS!

Flashbacks and story sequences are massively important to *XIII* – they introduce twists and turns and tie all the loose ends together, such as who the hell you are. You can even control your character during the flashback sequences. Intriguing.


△ He won't be waking up from this. Like *GoldenEye*, plugging poor unsuspecting fools in the back of the head will give you a headstart when infiltrating compounds.

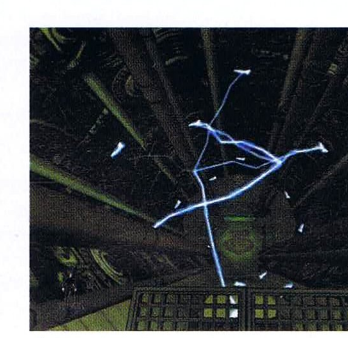

△ All cut-scenes use the in-game engine. And very nice they look, too.


△ The sleek M16 is reminiscent of the fantastic AR33 in *GoldenEye*.


△ They've spotted you! Fortunately, you're grenaded up – one pull of that pin and these fools will be recovering vital limbs from the other side of the world.


△ "Hello, McFly! Anyone there?" Icing stupid guards looks to be as much of a staple in *XIII* as it was in *GoldenEye* and *Perfect Dark* – of course, this time around, the AI's bound to be slightly more 'cunning'...


△ BLAM! Feel the force of what looks suspiciously like a DD44 Dostovoi. Nice-looking locations too.


△ The plot's deep and involving. Like Kittsy...

the whys and the do-you-mind-if-I-don'ts in an explosive – and probably pretty bloody, and deadly – climax.

Unsurprisingly, the Paris-based development team are keen to keep the story under wraps, especially as – due to the relatively late arrival of the game – it's likely to be, alongside the cel-shading, the feature they push most heavily, but the rest of the game was up for general consumption at last month's E3 games show in LA.

Although plainly in its early stages, there was plenty to admire about *XIII*: picking up broken bottles and chairs and using them as makeshift weapons added an interesting dimension, while your 'sixth sense' flips the idea of the standard radar on its head and makes scouting for enemies a lot more tense. Plus, like in *Die Hard*, you can use bullet-riddled corpses to shield yourself from fire.

"LIKE DIE HARD, YOU CAN GRAB BULLET-RIDDLED CORPSES AND USE THEM TO SHIELD YOU"

The only worry is that *XIII* might arrive too late in the day: when it appears early in 2003, *Metroid*, *Turok*, *Timesplitters 2*, *Die Hard* and *Nightfire* will have already been and gone, and, in its current guise, beyond the cel-shading and story, *XIII* might not *quite* be different enough to stand out among some very impressive, and largely similar, competition.

We shall, as they say, see...

NGC VERDICT

Visually, *XIII* is a unique experience, bringing the feel and structure of a comic book to life more impressively than any game previously. The story too is superb, like 24 crossed with The X-Files, and there's some interesting ideas at work, including the opportunity to pick up and use as weapons items that are lying about the place. Whether this will be enough to see off the likes of *Metroid Prime* and *Die Hard* remains to be seen – see page 14 for more on *Metroid*, while *Die Hard* – another Gamecube exclusive – introduces a wealth of new ideas that *XIII*'s going to have to be pretty smart to see off. That said, we should get a real idea of how this is shaping up between now and the autumn as the game is being pencilled in for early 2003. More soon.



UK	US	JAPAN
FEB 2003	FEB 2003	UNLIKELY

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

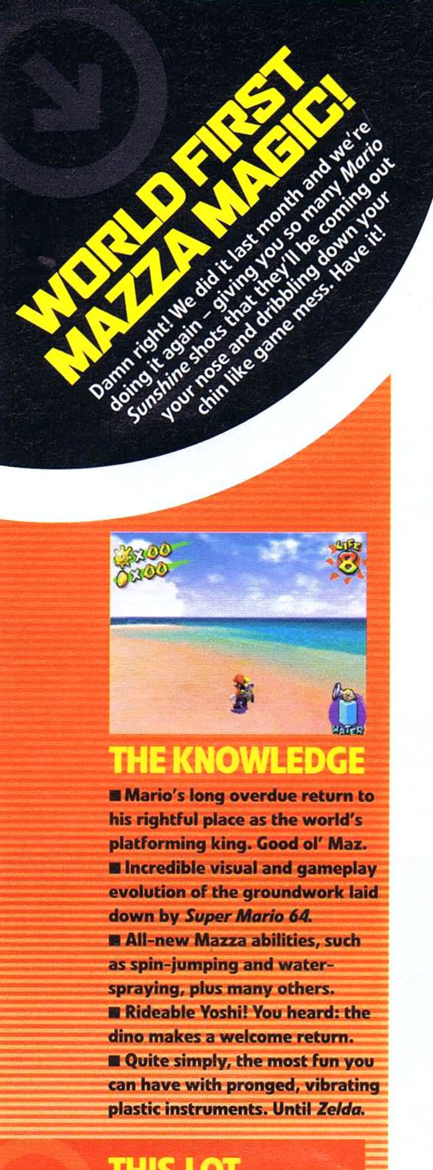
- We like the fact that you can use inanimate objects – but more should be made of it. How about being able to smash windows then use the leftover shards of glass as a makeshift knife?
- A huge range of guns – rocket launchers and homing missiles should make an appearance somewhere.
- Blood and guts. It's a must, really.

ANTICIPATION RATING

4

WORLD FIRST MAZZA MAGIC!

Damn right! We did it last month and we're doing it again – giving you so many *Mario Sunshine* shots that they'll be coming out your nose and dribbling down your chin like game mess. Have it!



Δ Mazza uses this tightrope as a makeshift trampoline – jump high enough and you can see the whole level for miles around.

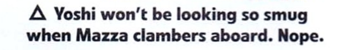
THE KNOWLEDGE

- **Mario's long overdue return to his rightful place as the world's platforming king. Good ol' Maz.**
- **Incredible visual and gameplay evolution of the groundwork laid down by *Super Mario 64*.**
- **All-new Mazza abilities, such as spin-jumping and water-spraying, plus many others.**
- **Rideable Yoshi! You heard: the dino makes a welcome return.**
- **Quite simply, the most fun you can have with pronged, vibrating plastic instruments. Until *Zelda*.**

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Super Mario 64 (NGC/1)**
  A revolution in 3D gaming – one of the finest games ever made.
- **Zelda: Ocarina of Time (NGC/24)**
  Shigsy's masterpiece. This could just be *the* Best Game Ever.





Δ Yoshi won't be looking so smug when Mazza clambers aboard. Nope.



Δ Just look at him! Riding Yoshi is what *Mario* games are aaaaaall about.



Δ Yoshi will come in nice and handy for those hard-to-get sun emblems.



Δ YEE-HA! Watch him! Now if only we could kick his babies off precipices...

SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

Mario shines on. Join us as we delve deeper into Weeding at the Windmill (*Sunshine*'s action-packed opener) and more...







Away from the manic insanity of Los Angeles' E3 show last month, there are three titles that remain deeply etched in our minds. *Zelda*, *Metroid* and *Mario*'s next-gen updates proved to be Nintendo's most intensely enjoyable titles – with *Mario* a game that continues to bring a smile to our face as we habitually re-run the footage, even the tenth and eleventh time over, thanks in no small part to its genius marriage of structure and hilarious comedy timing. Mmm.

We're not forgetting *Zelda* or *Metroid*, but one of the main reasons we love *Sunshine* so much is that it's got one pure attribute that very few games can boast – *it's non-stop fun.*

Don't get us wrong, Nintendo's other main attractions were all superb (and hugely entertaining) – in fact they were *better* than superb; almost to a game, they were sublime – but *Mario*'s timely return just seemed to feel so special. Of course, side by side with the likes of the gorgeously animated *Zelda*, *Mario*'s visuals – bar a handful of standout graphical highlights – seemed to pale into insignificance, but once you wrapped your hands around the Gamecube's joypad, everything became clear: *Mario Sunshine* is, without question, the most fun you'll have in a long, long time. Simply, it's outstanding.

Instantly accessible (even to those without any previous *Mario 64* experience) and instantly appealing, thanks to its stark, eye-melting primary colours, hummable music and almost dreamlike qualities, *Sunshine* excels in the one area the *Mario* games always have done – simple, addictive and excruciatingly compelling playability. Let's take the very first playable level from E3 (Weeding at the Windmill) as an example. At first glance, it doesn't seem particularly spectacular. There's



ON THE LEVEL

The E3 demo was divided into six parts, but not all six were individual levels – some of them were direct links to the bosses. Here's what was served up at the Nintendo stand…



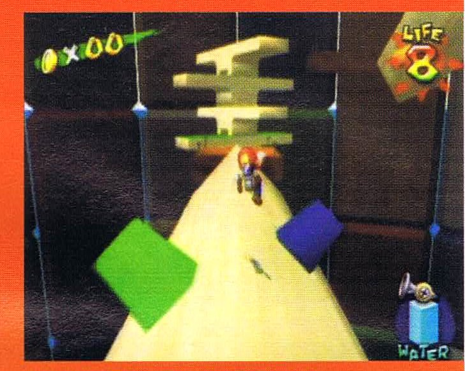
MUDDY PORT MYSTERY

Complex and sprawling, this level is best described as Meccano gone mad. Girders, grating, wire fences and cranes are the order of the day here. This is the level where you have the punchable swinging gates, and the octopus-thing that's spewing black oil everywhere.



PESKY PEST AND THE SHAKY MIRROR

This is the beach level with the mirrors on it. They are in fact solar panels that need to be salvaged from the enemies rampaging all over them. Looking to the peak of this level, you'll see Old Wiggler – the caterpillar from the Forest of Illusion.



JUNIOR'S PLAYROOM

The most disappointing of all the stages, this one – mainly because it feels like a bonus level of some sort. All you have to do is navigate Mario around sets of giant multicoloured cubes. A little dull – but no doubt there's more too it than we saw at E3.



△ More modes of transport. Is this how Mario first arrives?



△ No prizes for guessing what's in here, then – smash it Mazza!



△ We love this. Let's hope it doesn't get 'corrected' in the English version…



△ Never turn your back on an old Toad, Mario. We're betting he's pretty nifty with that big gnarly stick of his.

minimal texturing on the floors and walls, the grass doesn't look very convincing, and there's that unshakable feeling that you've already been here plenty of times before. Of course, such trivial worries are dispelled from the second you put your thumb to the analogue pad, because the control is so tight, and so instinctive that it's almost as if Mario is an extension of your thumb. A few short steps into the level and you bump into the natives of the island, who give you tips on how to execute some of Mario's new moves, such as his super-useful high spinning jump.

"INSTANTLY APPEALING, MARIO SUNSHINE IS ADDICTIVE AND COMPELLING – IT'S DREAMLIKE"

Once you feel you've got the gist of things, the path leads you to a shallow stream bridged by a thick elastic band stretched between two posts – and it's here that you get your first full hit of fun. Shimmy or jump onto the rubbery tightrope and you'll find yourself being propelled high into the air, giving you a brief yet tantalising glimpse of the Technicolor madness taking place over the high wall. After you've got the bouncing hilarity out of your system, it's time to mosey on over to a quaint little batch of houses, populated by a handful of friendly (and not-so-friendly) villagers who, again, gently feed you

COMBINE!



Part of the fun comes from figuring how you can combine his skills with each other or areas of interest in the level. The more you experiment the more you discover, such as Mario's ability to throw water around like a sprinkler…

MARIO'S MAD SKILLS

Don't fancy spending the whole time clearing up mess just because some prissy, pampered aristocrat is displeased? Dinnae worry – there's plenty of mindless hilarity to be had in *Mario Sunshine*...



SWING! Grab hold of the elastic bands stretched between posts and Mario uses it as a makeshift trapeze. It works very much like the bars found in *Sonic Adventure 2*, and timing your release carefully will fling you miles away.



SLIDE! If Mario jumps into the sludge he can slide around on his belly for ages. Not the most useful skill, but it's certainly good fun.



JET-PACK! Mario's backpack's second function. Tap X to point the nozzle down and Mario can use it to push himself into the air.



SURF! An extention of his *Mario 64* skill. This time the plumber can keep surfing at high speed for ages, negotiating floating walls as he goes.



△ The sun emblems are the new stars in *Mario Sunshine* – gotta catch 'em all.



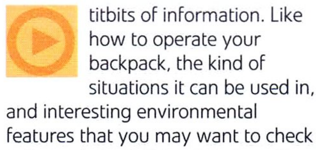
△ This is great. Only Nintendo could do a proper 30ft caterpillar fight.



△ There she is, the tease. He's had 20 years of it, the glutton for punishment.



△ See that windmill over there? Spray it with your hose to send it spinning.



titbits of information. Like how to operate your backpack, the kind of situations it can be used in, and interesting environmental features that you may want to check out – and check them out you will.

Even in this very small preview version of the level, there seems to be an inordinate amount of senseless fun to be had. The rubber bands can be used as trapezes for a swinging Mario. Windmills can be sent twirling at high speed before spewing coins from their mountings, and a huge wooden cog can be rolled up and down its housing with a hefty spray from Mario's front-facing nozzle. But it's not until you make your way over the huge wall that things really kick off. Once you've bounced or jet-packed your way into the equally gorgeous adjacent area, you'll be bombarded with bustling activity.

What looks like a bubbling chocolate volcano is the first thing that catches your eye. The effect of the gooey mess is simply astounding – closely resembling marbled chocolate. As Mario slips and slides over the offending brown stuff, the streaks of white are disturbed and mixed in a gorgeous silky-smooth layering effect. As compelling as it is to just mess about in the muck, it's not exactly the safest place to play, though, as giant balls of brown goo are spewed towards your position, leaving messy trails wherever they go. Whipping out your front-facing nozzle by tapping X and squeezing the right shoulder-trigger to spray you can start cleaning the mess up – and it's here that the first of the big surprises comes into play. Clean up enough mess and coins spring from the ground, Saplings pop up briefly before ballooning into full-size trees and, rather confusingly, *whole walls* rumble out of the earth in anticipation of your spring cleaning. Furthermore, those rolling balls of goo can be washed off, revealing piranha plants that you can fill with water until they eventually explode.

Sounds mental, doesn't it? And you couldn't be closer to the truth. The

PUMPING!



With the right-shoulder analogue, you can determine the strength of Mario's jet. In order to shoot the water out, Mario has to pump the handles with his stubby little arms, making the concertina at the top of his pack force the water out. Just a small thing, but it gives you an idea of the attention to detail in this brilliant, brilliant game.



△ Look at it – it's completely insane! Of the levels we saw, this was definitely the most complicated and intriguing.

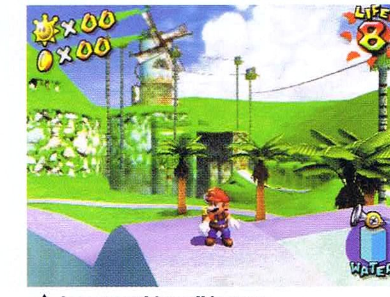


△ Most enemies can be dispatched with a well-aimed squirt of the water cannon.



△ Looks lovely, doesn't it? We still have no idea what this boat does, though. A way to another island, perhaps?


△ Mario can now swing hand-over-hand under this mesh…


△ Just over this wall is your first encounter with the slime.

level of activity and amount of things to see and do is incredible. With each visit to Nintendo's stand we discovered more and more stuff to play with. The hidden 'M' graffiti dotted around the levels; the floating leaf that could be propelled via the use of your water cannon; those strangely addictive elastic tightropes and the many windmills dotted around – and that's without actually playing the level properly. This is perhaps *Mario Sunshine*'s biggest strength – it's enjoyable no matter what you do. Simply controlling Mario again was enough to bring a smile to our faces, and just *being* in the game is entertainment in itself – a boast that only a small, elite clutch of titles can lay claim to.

"THE LEVEL OF ACTIVITY AND THE AMOUNT OF THINGS TO SEE AND DO IN MARIO IS INCREDIBLE"

With each new level we tried, the overall experience was slightly different (the design of Muddy Port Mystery, for example, is very complicated indeed, with fences and girders swinging all over the place and thin, crisscrossing gantries for you to navigate), but one factor remains throughout – that unparalleled, tactile joy of putting Mario through his paces. In case you hadn't guessed, we simply cannot praise *Mario Sunshine* enough. Unashamedly biased towards the little fella we may be, but there's no denying it – Mario will be one of the greatest games of all time. Really.

NGC VERDICT

A month after coming back from E3 and Geraint's still buzzing like a toddler after six cans of Tizer, and who can blame him. Just check out the DVD on the cover of this very issue to see for yourself.

This game has Nintendo magic oozing from every pore. Mario's Gamecube makeover gives his cheeky personality even more weight, with loads of animations, moves and sound effects to accompany his every movement. It mightn't be as revolutionary as *Mario 64* was back in its day, but this is an immensely vivid and dynamic evolution of the series that has exceeded our expectations in about every possible way.

Rest assured, you'll be in heaven from the second you fit the tiny disk into your Cube. Next month: review…



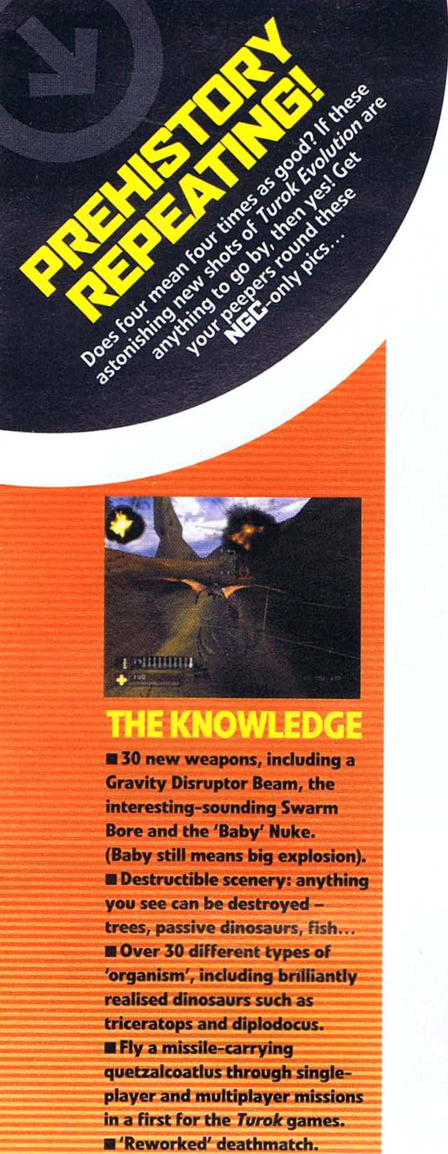
UK	US	JAPAN
SEPT	AUGUST	19TH JULY

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- Plenty of variation in the locations, please, Mr Shigsy. If the whole thing looks like Benidorm we won't be best pleased.
- An enormous quest of *Super Mario 64* proportions, with a stupid amount of extras to seek out.
- Sweet minigames, such as Peach's slide and the Koopa Race.
- The return of the star slide!

ANTICIPATION RATING





PREHISTORY REPEATING!

Does four mean four times as good? If these astonishing new shots of *Turok Evolution* are anything to go by, then yes! Get your peepers round these NGC-only pics...

THE KNOWLEDGE

- 30 new weapons, including a Gravity Disruptor Beam, the interesting-sounding Swarm Bore and the 'Baby' Nuke. (Baby still means big explosion).
- Destructible scenery: anything you see can be destroyed – trees, passive dinosaurs, fish...
- Over 30 different types of 'organism', including brilliantly realised dinosaurs such as triceratops and diplodocus.
- Fly a missile-carrying quetzalcoatlus through single-player and multiplayer missions in a first for the *Turok* games.
- 'Reworked' deathmatch.
- Hyper-intelligent enemies that hunt in packs, hide from you and try to pick you off from afar.
- New story.

THIS LOT ALSO DID...

- **Turok Dinosaur Hunter (NGC/1)**
  The best *Turok* of the lot... so far. Bloody and brilliant.
- **Turok 2: Seeds of Evil (NGC/21)**
  Bigger and better-looking, but jerky and *staggeringly* hard.

△ The bow and arrow still isn't a worthy alternative to the guns on offer in *Turok*.

△ Mmm... realistic muzzle flashes. Jud's favourite.

△ Feel it! Watch people get hot under the collar with the new flame-thrower.

△ Guts. Nice to see some claret spilling – that's what *Turok*'s all about.

TUROK EVOLUTION

Bigger weapons, bigger dinosaurs: what more do you need from the fourth *Turok*?

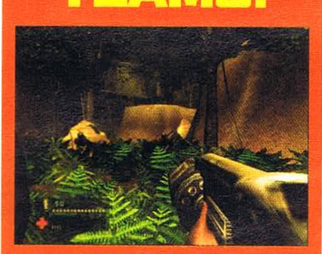


We've got five first-person shooters scheduled to arrive on Gamecube before Christmas, and *Turok* is set to steal a march on them all with its rapidly approaching 6th September release.

Whether it'll actually hit that date is up for discussion as the latest version **NGC** played suggested there was still a fair amount of fine tuning to be done before the code could be boxed up and shipped off.

However, one thing's for sure: if the likes of *Metroid Prime* and *Die Hard* think they've got themselves a free run, they clearly haven't banked on The 'Rok. He's not a Nintendo exclusive anymore, but he's still hot stuff. Witness the game's all-new (but still largely unnamed) weapons, for example: the nuclear weapon whose explosion slices your enemies in half on its way back, sending them flying off into the air for good measure, leaving a trail of claret on their way up; the gun that fires off a group of purple spheres that hunt down and explode your enemies; the *Quake*-like railgun; the grenade launcher that also doubles up as a proximity mine layer... and that's where things get even more interesting. Each gun has a twin function, such as the standard shotgun, which can fire six bullets, but can also discharge them in one supremely vicious round. Or the pistol, which has a handy sniper

TEAMS!



***Turok Evolution* employs a system called Squad Dynamics, enabling troops of dinosaurs, or squads of foes, to work in teams rather than individually. It makes gameplay pretty interesting: you hardly ever encounter solitary enemies, and when you do, they just squawk for the other members of their troop, or radio for back-up. Clever stuff.**

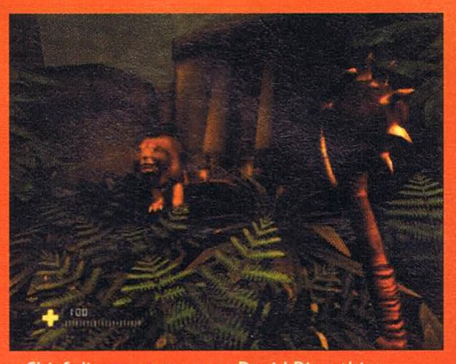
Fourquel dinosaur hunting – and this time it's personal

FEELS LIKE NEW

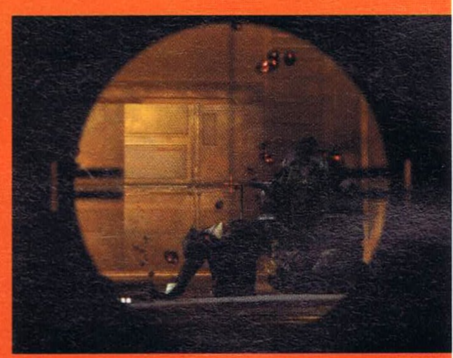
After a rigorous playtest of *Turok Evolution*, we were intrigued to find some new features in the game. Here's the info you need...



■ We all knew that you get to fly on the back of a quetzalcoatlus, but have you seen the beautiful cityscapes you can soar through later in the game? This one's like Cloud City.



■ Chief dino-programmer David Dienstbier claimed you could destroy anything in the game – and he's just *about* right. Dinosaurs aren't the only thing – how about plants and fish?



■ Even your basic hand arsenal like clubs and arrows pack a punch now, but it's the double function of the guns that makes shooting a pleasure. Just try the head-removing sniper.



△ Kittsy's happy: Turok can now gun down unsuspecting monkeys. Nice.



△ Store up all of the shotgun's shells and fire them off in one painful go.



△ The environments are brilliantly detailed – and unlike previous *Turok* games aren't fogged up.



△ One of *Evolution*'s enemies feels the full force of the flamethrower.



△ Destroy everything! You can knock down trees, remove dinosaur legs and kill marine life. Huzzah!

PLAY TUROK EVO NOW! Who's been collecting their *Turok* flight coupons since issue 65, then? Well, if you have, turn to page 46 for what to do next. If you've got all six, you could be visiting Acclaim in the US!

function on it. Or the tiny little bow and arrow – normally a last resort – which now comes equipped with a posion arrows, allowing you to watch in glee as enemies tumble to their knees, prehistoric toxins coursing through their veins. Of the weapons currently available in the latest version of the game, though, the most eye-blistering has to be the flamethrower. Stick it in the direction of a foe and fill them full of yellow death and they'll run off screaming into the jungles, their high-pitched wail drifting through the foliage.

And that's another area in which *Evolution* is shaping up superbly: the jungles are phenomenal, packed with detail and the most unbelievable grass textures we've ever seen. Add in the fact that you can affect and change the shape of the jungle by knocking down trees, and shoot holes through thick shrubbery in order to progress through the level and you've got one of the most complete and interactable play areas out there.

> **"TUROK EVOLUTION FEATURES A NUKE WHOSE EXPLOSION SLICES YOUR ENEMIES IN HALF..."**

The levels we've seen so far seem to work in much the same way as the first *Turok*, starting off in the jungle and progressing through ancient stone temples to cavernous alien ships. The latter certainly worked a treat in the first game, but let's hope there's not too much reliance on extra-terrestrial locales as the second and, particularly, third *Turok*'s suffered because the brilliant Jurassic jungle was squeezed out in favour of great-looking, but dull, otherworlds.

Providing there's no coding cock-ups, we should have our hands on a copy of this next month. Excited?

NGC VERDICT

If, like us, you were a big fan of the original *Turok*, you'll be rejoicing at the sight of *Evolution*, a fourquel that takes the series back to its roots. You'll be pleased to hear the weapons are outstanding: inventive and bloody, they'll keep you entertained from the first minute to the last. This time round, even basics such as the knives and the bow and arrow have undergone an overhaul, offering far more than just a last resort. Equally great are the environments, sporting a look that's reminiscent of the first game but plainly far, far more detailed. Enemies are intelligent and this works well in the context of a battle, forcing you to use your head and gut instinct, and also ensuring that each battle feels much different to the last. More on this soon...



UK 6 SEPT | US 6 SEPT | JAPAN UNLIKELY

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE INCLUDED

- More save points. *Turok 2* spaced them out so much you could complete three-quarters of the level before finding one.
- Less flying, more dying: the flying sections are great, but we don't want to see them taking over *Turok Evolution*.
- Not all the weapons have been unveiled yet but one thing's for sure: a return for the Cerebral Bore is a must.



ANTICIPATION RATING






4





MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2

Mirra's nemesis turns up the heat.

If *Tony Hawk's* is your idea of a good night in, *Mat Hoffman*, from the same stable, will most likely prove an equally enticing prospect, making the switch to BMX, but continuing the reliance on 'big' air, manuals and grinding.

You might have missed the first game, a PSOne exclusive – luckily, the sequel promises to deliver even more of what made its predecessor great. Graphically this isn't going to win any prizes, but gameplay improvements have been made in key areas: the main game tosses out time limits, leaving you to bike around the eight parks for as long as you like; there's an improved photographic option, allowing you to collate a monster scrapbook of your best stunts; and the first game's remarkable course editor is back, bigger and better. We'll have a review in the issue after next.



△ ***Hoffman*** **was a treat on PSOne, outdoing** ***Dave Mirra's*** **with a wealth of clever features and solid stunt work.**



DAVE MIRRA XXX

X-rated BMX action. Intrigued?

NGC SWEARING 'N' NUDITY! *You heard! Naked laydees, f-words, peeing in public places – it's all in the new Mirra. Read on…*



In what must be one of the most radical changes of direction of any game ever, *Dave Mirra XXX* is still going to be a BMX stunt game, but it's also going to feature objectives based around women with their, er, 'things' out, blokes removing their cacks and peeing into swimming pools, dogs laying 'eggs' on the sidewalk, lorries crushing passers-by, and liberal use of the f-word. Why? Who knows, but one thing's for sure, *Dave Mirra XXX* is a dead-cert 18. Interested, are you?





GODZILLA DESTROY ALL MONSTERS MELEE

Besides the great name, this fighter promises to offer you 14 characters (including Mechagodzilla and King Ghidorah), ten playable arenas to smash to bits (yep, including Tokyo), and a 'robust' combo system. If you've played *Godzilla Generations* on DC, you'll be familiar with what depths this kind of game can plumb, but with the steadying hand of Infogrames behind it, we're hoping this does justice to a pretty fab licence. Expect things to 'get prehistoric' in Autumn.

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS

Based on the forthcoming Ben Affleck movie, this latest Tom Clancy outing is built around the engine developers Red Storm created for their top PC shooter, *Ghost Recon*. If you've ever played a *Rainbow Six* game, you'll be well up to speed with how this one's likely to work: teams are created, waypoints plotted, and terrorists taken down using super-stealth, gadgets and plenty of ammo.

Described as a techno-thriller, the game sees you facing off against neo-Nazis in over ten international locales. It's pencilled in for autumn here…





"*Wolverine's Revenge* is an intriguing marriage of styles"







HIDDEN INVASION

This sci-fi-themed beat-'em-up sees you playing a member of the Special Forces, sent in to investigate "a strange and sinister alien threat". Which means gratuitous third-person violence, both of the fist and gun variety. In appearance this bears some resemblance to Core's awful N64 scrapper, *Fighting Force*, but whereas the excitement level in that flatlined somewhere around the opening cut-scene, *Hidden Invasion* coders Toka are promising stacks of bloodstained action. Review soon.

DONALD DUCK WHO IS PK?





At the risk of spoiling everything for you, PK is Donald Duck's superhero alter-ego and it's him you play as in this cel-shaded third-person shindig. Developers Ubi Soft are promising four massive worlds to explore, while PK has, at his disposal, all manner of gadgets: rocket packs, the PK car and the interesting-sounding Rex-Swing. From what we've seen so far, this certainly looks the part, but then *Donald Duck Goin' Quackers* looked alright, yet had all the subtlety and in-game enjoyment of a breeze block.
Stick with us to follow its progress.



AGGRESSIVE INLINE SKATING



This newie from the *Dave Mirra* team, is going to do for skating what *Tony Hawk's* did for skateboarding. Or, at least, that's the plan. Ten licensed skaters, stacks of tricks and the "best visuals" ever created for an extreme sports game. Apparently. Intriguing.

WOLVERINE'S REVENGE



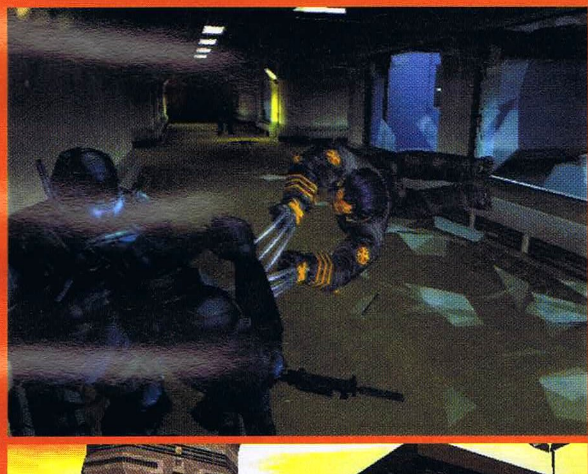
More means claw: new shots and info.

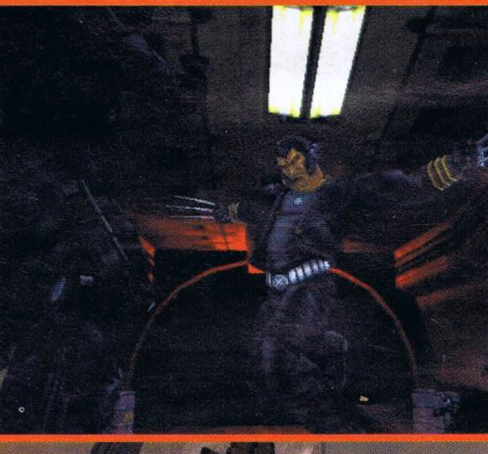


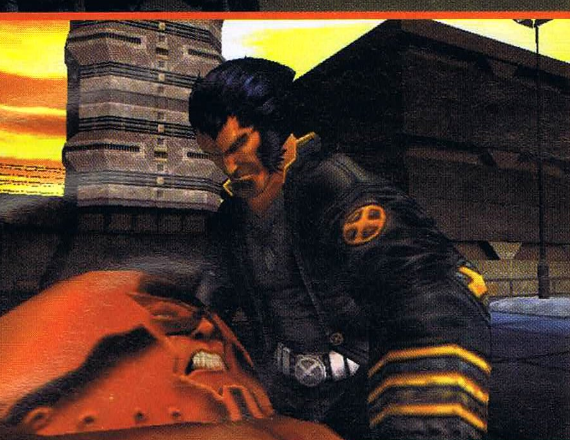
Batman of the Future; *Superman*; *Spider-Man*; *Spider-Man: The Movie*; *Batman Vengeance* – it's been a mixed bag for superheroes on Nintendo consoles lately. But *Wolverine's Revenge* is hoping to change all that with its startling half-cel-shaded, half-realistic look and an intriguing marriage of the beat-'em-up and *Metal Gear*-style stealth moments. Very interesting.

Wolverine's claws will form the focal point of fights, but the athletic adamantium-plated nutter will also be able to make use of the people he's decking. If he thumps someone in the stomach, when they double-up he can leap onto their back and use them as a launch pad to the next enemy. Few other gameplay details have emerged yet, but there's going to be plenty of foes (Juggernaut and Colossus) as well as the voices of Mark Hamill and Patrick Stewart.











"Reign of Fire sees you using vehicles to hunt down dragons"



REIGN OF FIRE

Billed as a third-person vehicle combat game, *Reign of Fire* sees you jumping into a selection of heavily-armed all-terrain vehicles and hunting down dragons. Why? Because the sole aim of these huge beasts is to, er, wipe out the entire human race. Including you. Thankfully though, those of you with sociopathic tendencies can flip the script and play things from a scaly beast's point of view. While the main game is structured around completing certain missions, such as rescuing farmers or defending some livestock from getting barbecued, there are enough open-ended sections to keep things interesting – taking over a gun tower isn't vital for early progress, but do so and you'll be able to use it later. Impressive at E3 – look for more soon.



△ The dragons are fearsome fiends, modelled in menacing shades of grey.















FREEKSTYLE

This latest entry in EA Sports' (cough) Big range is a two-wheeled take on *SSX Tricky*, combining real(ish) physics with distinctly *un*real stunts. Just take a gander at what that fool is doing in the screenshot on the bottom left.

There's eight courses to choose from, including Monumental Motoplex, a less colourful but equally devilish take on *SSX Tricky*'s Tokyo Megaplex, while EA are promising over 80 stunts, marrying regular grinds with irregular manoeuvres like the Helicopter. This wasn't playable at E3 on GC, but the PS2 version was looking pretty interesting. More soon.

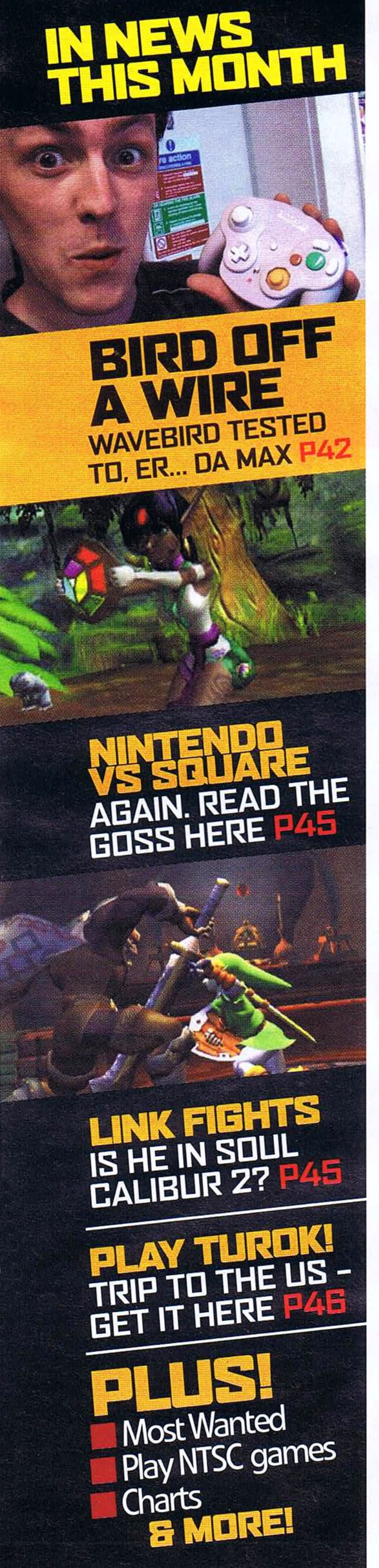


PROJECT BG&E

From the creators of Rayman…

If you've ever gawped in awe at French films like The City of Lost Children then *Project BG&E* will be right up your street. The new game from Michel Ancel, the guy who created *Rayman*, *Project* is a delicious-looking 3D adventure, which marries *Body Harvest* and *Pokémon Snap*, as you use vehicles and take photos of animals in a bid to uncover a dastardly plot. Very promising…





IS GAMECUBE NINTENDO'S LAST CONSOLE?

AS NINTENDO JAPAN PRESIDENT HIROSHI YAMAUCHI CALLS IT A DAY, ARE THE COMPANY ABOUT TO ANNOUNCE THEIR HARDWARE RETIREMENT?

BY GERAINT EVANS



After 52 years in charge of the company, charismatic President Hiroshi Yamauchi, finally relinquished his grasp on Nintendo, the company he steered from humble card-manufacturer to global-games giant. The announcement sparked some interesting comments from the retiring president as well as Satoru Iwata, the former General Manager of Nintendo Japan and the man chosen to replace Yamauchi – including the suggestion that Gamecube would be Nintendo's last-ever console.

At a recent press conference, Iwata reiterated Nintendo's focus over the coming years, and placed the emphasis on quality, innovative software over needlessly increasing the power of hardware – a sure sign that they're not looking to start researching Gamecube's successor any time soon. For Iwata and Nintendo, the bottom line is that the current level of technology is perfectly adequate. In a climate where higher polygon counts and faster processing speed is becoming a preoccupation with developers, it's easy to forget that it's inventive gaming that's carried Nintendo since the NES, not Memory Bus Bandwidths, Pixel Configurations and 3D CG Geometric Transformation. Whatever they are when they're at home.

THE COMPETITION

In a dig at both Sony and Microsoft during his first press conference since taking on his new role, Iwata was taking

STOP PRESS

DOSHIN REACHES EUROPE
The gangly armed yellow giant may well make his way over to these shores, and much sooner than you think, too. Due for release in September, it will serve as Nintendo's toe in the icy waters of European gaming, to check whether or not we'll be receptive to Japan's stranger game offerings. If all goes well, maybe Animal Leader will make it, too. Here's hoping.



WHO ARE WE? This month's news is researched and written by Tim Weaver, Martin Kitts and Geraint Evans. Or, The Weavernator, Kittsy Litter and The Boy From Vergon 6 to give them their real names.



IT'S SOFTWARE OVER HARDWARE IN THE BIG N'S FIVE-YEAR PLAN...

Nintendo have built better relationships in the nine months since Gamecube launched in Japan than at any time during the N64's troubled existence (Toshihiro Nagoshi of Sega, above, being just one) – all with a view to offering players not just more polygons and better lighting, but better *games*.

IN-HOUSE

Although Nintendo have handed out many of their most cherished franchises, they're keeping key titles in-house at their R&D teams in Kyoto. From here you'll see *Mario Sunshine*, *The Legend of Zelda*, *1080° 2* and *Mario Kart* emerging, as well as the Gamecube instalment of *Pokémon*. The fact that their workload has been freed up also means they can concentrate on creating brand-new titles with brand-new characters, as well as introducing further innovations alongside the Game Boy Advance. Instead of better hardware, this is what really interests them. Recently, Shigeru Miyamoto told **NGC**: "Nintendo doesn't believe that the improvements in hardware and technology per se can gain its game creator more opportunity as far as gameplay goes. That's why we're now aggressively connecting each different platform... because that's the best way to make unique games."

SECOND-PARTIES

US-based NST have already delivered *Wave Race: Blue Storm*, while Silicon Knights are finishing *Eternal Darkness* as we speak. Add Retro's *Metroid* and Rare's *Starfox* and these – the companies Nintendo have a financial stake in – will prove essential.

KEY THIRD PARTIES

Sega now have *F-Zero*, Namco are coding *Starfox*, Capcom have already completed development duties on a series of *Zelda* games for the GBA, and still there's more to come. Nintendo see this process of dividing out some of their best-loved franchises as an ideal opportunity to (a) breathe new life into some of their oldest gaming series', and (b) help cultivate greater relations with companies they previously had little dealings with. If these tie-ups prove to be a success, there's little doubt that Nintendo will attempt to continue this approach. TW



△ Take one last look at this face. Won't you miss his leathery skin and scary eyes?

a tough stance. "Using their game machines, they seek to control the distribution of all types of entertainment," he said – a statement of intent by Nintendo that they will not easily be drawn to hopping on board the online/hard-drive bandwagon. Indeed, their strategy is markedly different: "We want to make games that are interesting. We'd be happy to work with any company that has new ideas for gaming". And that's an area where Nintendo are certainly practising what they're preaching – their collaborations with Capcom, Sega and Namco are testament to this.

IT'S NO BATTLEZONE

It's been clear for a while that Nintendo are determined to distance themselves from Sony and Microsoft and the battle that currently rages between the two multimedia machines, and this was an idea Iwata was quick to press again. "No matter how many consoles Sony sells and whatever Microsoft does, it is important for us to make our software attractive enough to drive consumers to buy our hardware." A reference to Sony's research into PlayStation 3, certainly, but Iwata wasn't simply attacking his rivals – he was sending out a grave warning to the industry as a whole: "We can't be too optimistic about the games market. No matter what great products you come up with, people get bored". A sentiment mirrored by Yamauchi himself: "The element of surprise is critical, but this is becoming extremely difficult – game developers are fast running out of new ideas."

> "THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE IS CRITICAL BUT DEVELOPERS ARE FAST RUNNING OUT OF IDEAS"

LACK OF INVENTION

There was more than enough evidence for this at E3. Nintendo's stand aside, the majority of the show was saturated with relentless clones of already well-established gaming styles. There was a staggering amount of third-person adventures, platformers and cartoon licences, all almost identical beyond the visuals and front end. If this is already the case, at the beginning of the current generation of consoles, it beggars belief that Sony are already making noises towards a third, more powerful console.

Suffice to say, Nintendo won't be so quick to follow suit. "The effort to produce machines with better technology has reached its limit," says Iwata. "If things continue, they may lead to the decline of the entire industry". An over-reaction? Maybe not.

Developers need to stop looking to new platforms to fulfil their dreams. The hardware available now is more than sufficient to support interesting, new, inventive, high-quality gaming experiences – if your idea is good enough, it's good enough for *now*. It's a message that certainly isn't without its merits.

So will Nintendo follow Sega into a software-only existence? Who knows – rumblings coming out of Japan seem to suggest that the company *are* a little disillusioned with the switch to multimedia and the importance placed on features other than games by Sony and Microsoft. What is safe to say, though, is that Gamecube will definitely be around a lot longer than the traditional five-year life-cycle of past console generations, and that there'll be more of an emphasis placed on games than at any time before.

And thank jiminy for that.

SHORT CUTS

THREE TIMES THE ADVENTURE

Sega are looking to give the world a third *Sonic Adventure* game according to reports coming out of Japan this month. The threequel is likely to be unveiled at the World Hobby Fair in Japan in the next couple of days, with a format not yet confirmed. However, it seems certain that Gamecube will be the recipient of a version, not least because of the previous instalment's success on Nintendo's box of delights. We'll have more in Newsdesk next month. Until then, cross your fingers and pray to Mullah Omar that it's better than *Sonic 2*.

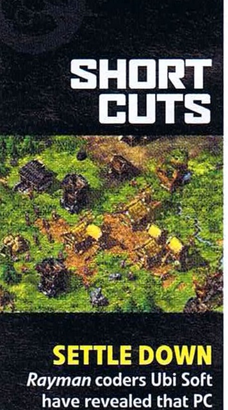
NOT SO BOSS

Boss Games, the driving specialists that brought us the technically delicious *Top Gear Rally* and *World Driver Championship* for N64 have closed. *TGR* was one of the first racing games for N64, scoring an impressive 86 way back in **NGC**/5, while *World Driver* was even better – we awarded it a HEE-UGE 91 in **NGC**/32. The company were hard at work on another racer, this time for the Xbox (although a Gamecube port was up and running at their HQ in Seattle in under five weeks) but they just couldn't find a publisher for it. They'll be missed, you know.

MYSTERY NINTENDO GAME? After flicking through a stack of new Japanese games mags we came across the strangely titled Giftpia from Nintendo. After a little investigation we managed to even blag some footage (we'll try and get some shots for you next month). Unfortunately, it's very hard to tell what's going on exactly, but early indications suggest that it's some kind of Animal Forest-esque affair, with an emphasis on communication with the local townsfolk. Intriguing...



SHORT CUTS



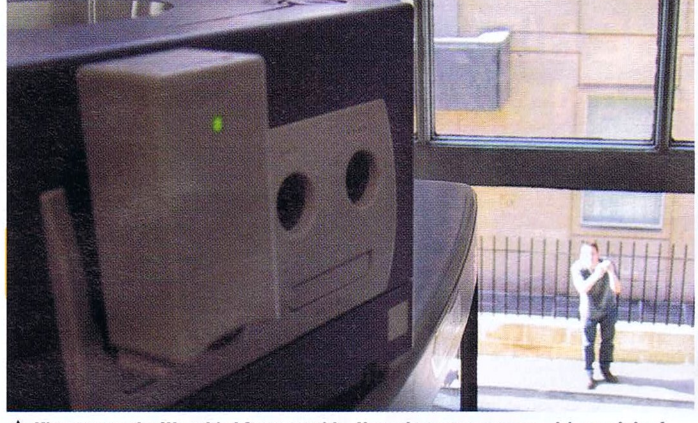
SETTLE DOWN

Rayman coders Ubi Soft have revealed that PC strategy game *The Settlers* is coming to Gamecube. Excited? No? Well, maybe it's time you had a rethink. **NGC**'s very own Dan reckons it's an absolute hoot: "It's a strategy game where you have to tap the area around you for new resources in order to build a bigger, better society. It's a bit like *Civilisation*, but there's not so much reliance on war." So there we have it. Expect it 2003.



GREEN GAMECUBE

After the success of X-Men and Spider-Man it seems every man and his ferret wants to stick comic book heroes on the silver screen – this year we're getting Daredevil, and next year it's The Hulk. And – wouldn't you know it – developers Universal Interactive aren't going to hang about in replicating all the fun of the glare with the scary-eyed Hulkster hitting Gamecube in some kind of third-person adventure early next year. We'll have more as this develops.



△ Kittsy tests the Wavebird from outside. Note the green square – it's receiving!

△ The beautiful Wavebird. *Just look at it, you!*

BIRD OFF A WIRE

We've got one in! Get the first verdict on Nintendo's wireless pad...

The WaveBird had slipped to the back of our minds after Nintendo stopped giving out info pretty much as soon as it was announced. But, since E3, our love for the peripheral has been rekindled, and after its recent release in the US we couldn't get one in fast enough.

So what's it like?

Brilliant. It really is. And the best part is that it's genuinely useful. Inside the package you get a WaveBird, the receiver you plug into your Gamecube controller port, and a couple of batteries for the WaveBird itself. Being an official Nintendo product, quality-wise, this is top notch. The analogue feels just as it should, all the buttons are placed exactly as they are on the 'normal' pad, the D-pad is still stupidly small, and the Z-button is still hard to get to. The only major difference (apart from the missing cord) is an on/off switch to the right of the D-pad, the chunky battery-holding bit and the lack of a rumble function

RUMBLE SACK

Of course, the reason the rumble has gone is so that it doesn't drain the power from the two AA batteries housed inside the casing. Unlike we initially thought, the battery casing (which sits behind the D-pad and C-stick) doesn't get in the way at all (unless you have fingers like a gorilla), so it's no less comfortable to hold than the original controller. As for operating it, it's simple. All you have to do is change the channel on the receiver to the same channel on the WaveBird via a discreet little wheel.

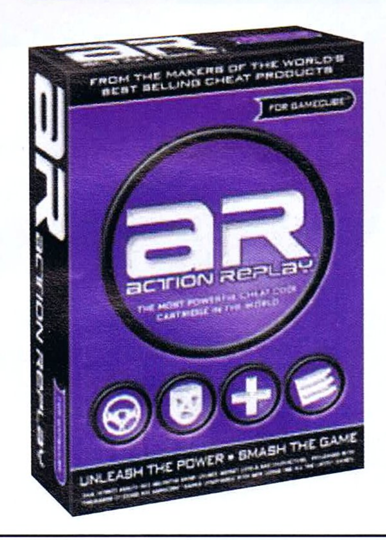
FROM A DISTANCE

The best bit of all, though, is just how *well* it works. Kittsy, for example, walked out of our office, up the stairs and down the other side (quite a long way) while smacking all the buttons, and *Smash Bros* on the telly in our office still showed that the pad was functioning properly – very impressive indeed. Unfortunately, we still don't know exactly when the unit will make it over here, and at a whopping 50 nicker to import it, we'd think long and hard about sending away for one.

Hopefully though, it should be available here by the Autumn. **GE**

CAP A LOAD!

Mario might have appeared in well over 20 games in his time, but he's still got a long way to go if he's going to oust the *Street Fighter* series as the undisputed sequel king. This month, developers Capcom revealed that their original *Street Fighter* arcade game has spawned an incredible *60 sequels*, selling 25 million copies in the process. And that's just the start: blue-suited platform king, *Rockman* (*Mega Man* in the West) has spawned a slightly more staggering 62 sequels, although it *has* shifted fewer copies – still a far-from-disappointing 15.3 million. (The latest Japanese Top 30 reveals the newest GBA incarnation in the franchise, the creatively titled *Rockman Zero*, is at number five, keeping the bank balance ticking over very nicely, thanks very muchly.) Interestingly, the *Resident Evil* series is third on their list of successes, with 22 different versions of the games on various consoles, but has sold more than 20 million 'units' – favourable indeed when compared to the other two. Just goes to prove – sequels pay. TW



IMPORT? FORGET IT!

Play NTSC games on your PAL Gamecube, courtesy of Datel...

It was only a matter of time, really. Those clever third-party-peripheral-making monkeys at Datel are set to release a Gamecube version of their popular Action Replay cartridges. As usual, the gaming gizmo will unlock the potential of your games by allowing you to cheat like the talentless piece of crud you really are, giving you extra lives, unlimited ammo, invincibility and the like, as well as creating all kinds of bizarre in game effects, too – but that's not where it ends. The new Gamecube Action Replay disc will also allow you to play Japanese and American games on your PAL Gamecube, which means that you'll be able to get your paws on all the latest Gamecube games before they arrive over here. Obviously, that's if you don't mind forking out for the cost of importing them.

Not only that, but should you find cheating to be the most deplorable gaming act known to man, Datel are also releasing a disc that can be used solely for playing import games. Called the Freeloader, it will cost around about 20 of the old quid, a good tenner less than the Action Replay disc.

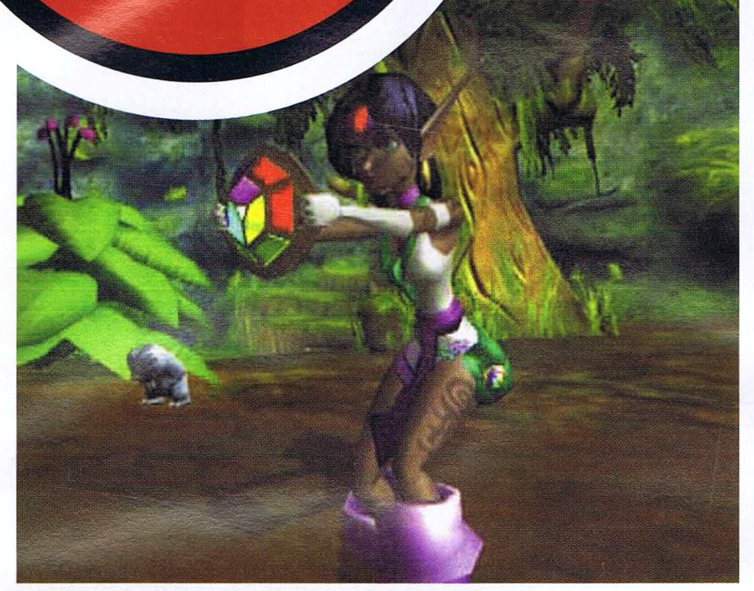
Both versions will be released this summer – just in time for *Mario Sunshine* then... **GE**

DIRTY DANCING Ker-razy ex-rassler Lou Albano, who danced around as Mario in the titles of the US Super Mario cartoon show (see NGC/40 for more on his crazy 'moves') is set to star in the Legends of Wrestling sequel. Let's hope he gets to 'do' the 'Mario'. What a treat.

SPACEWORLD 2002 CANCELLED? One of our favourite events of the year is rumoured to be cancelled. August's Spaceworld is Nintendo's own show, where they bring out their forthcoming titles for both press and public to try out. Unfortunately, it's looking likely that it won't go ahead.

THE BIG Q

AS RUMOURS PERSIST WE ASK: ARE RARE GOING MULTI-FORMAT AND, IF SO, WHAT WILL IT MEAN FOR US?



△ *Kameo* was actually *at* E3 2001 – so where was it at this year's show?



△ *Donkey Kong Racing* – nothing more has been seen other than intro shots like this.

The best kind of information is, soberly or not, most often divulged with a cheeky wink here and a furtive nod there. And nowhere is there more winking and nodding than at the E3 games show in LA, a trade show so stashed with hearsay and rumour it's often difficult to determine what's real and what's made up. That was certainly the case when it came to the subject of Rare, and the whispers that they were about to announce a decision to go multi-format.

So, are we any clearer as to what's going on up at Twycross? No. Amid all the gossip, all the chinese whispers, one thing became abundantly clear to us: despite many claiming they knew what was going on, most actually didn't have the foggiest . Even **NGC**'s own best sources couldn't agree – every one we asked gave us conflicting information.

Still, the evidence is, nonetheless, compelling.

DO YOU ACCEPT CARDS?

It all started with *that* Christmas card, a cheeky little piece of fun that seemed to point to a multi-format new year with its suggestion of Xbox and PS2-shaped presents under the tree. Also, Nintendo admitted in an interview earlier in the year that Rare were going to be publishing many of their forthcoming projects, pointing towards greater self-sufficiency. More significant was the mysterious absence of *Kameo* and *Donkey Kong Racing* from this year's E3, despite *Kameo* being present at the previous year's show. Toss in the absolute refusal by Nintendo to answer any questions relating to their relationship with Rare at this year's E3 press conference and suddenly things are looking to be heading one way. The reality is less conclusive, of course. Rare have always been fond of a joke or two and Nintendo refusing to say anything is hardly anything new. However, the lack of anything other than *Starfox* at this year's E3 is not so easily written off.

HOTEL CALIFORNIA

Which brings us onto California-based Activision, the company behind the *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater* games. Most recently **NGC** spies spotted Rare staff attending an ultra-exclusive Activision party at E3. It could, of course, mean nothing. But what about sightings of Activision staff bunking up in hotels in and around Twycross? This, plainly, is of much more interest… and there's no smoke without fire. Rumours persist, particularly with regard to Activision – only last month a key UK source emailed us to reveal that Rare's switch from Nintendo to Activision was signed, sealed and delivered. As it turned out, he was wrong – but he told us it was only a matter of time before it happened. This was just another delay.

So, question is, if Rare go – and they most likely will *at some point* – how much would Nintendo really miss them?

SLOW BURNERS

Rare are immensely talented and any machine blessed with their genius is going to have a significant advantage over its competitors. But, at the same time, their productivity is painfully low. Having them on board mattered massively during the software droughts of the N64's life cycle – games such as *Jet Force Gemini*, *DK64* and *Perfect Dark* kept the console ticking over with high-quality gaming when no one else could deliver – including Nintendo. But there was a price to pay – sometimes a price of up to 15 months between titles.

With Gamecube, Nintendo have woken up: third parties are arriving left, right and centre, and Capcom, Sega, Namco and Square are all set to make potentially groundbreaking games for Gamecube, leaving Rare in a different, less enviable, perhaps less attractive position from their point of view.

Importantly, punters won't have to *rely* on Rare to provide them with their next premium-quality gaming hit – far from it. And maybe that's why only *Starfox* is coming out of Rare any time soon – and why the likes of *Kameo* and *Donkey Kong Racing* have disappeared.

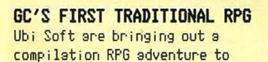
We'll keep you informed. **TW/GE**



OR MAYBE THEY'RE STAYING AFTER ALL…



One of our most reliable sources in the industry – who has close ties with Rare – says he's certain they're not going anywhere. At E3, he told us he'd been speaking to management at the Twycross funsters and they were becoming frustrated with the rumours surrounding the company, particularly that they were in discussions with Activision. Another developer told us: "I just don't see any reason for them to move. What haven't they got at the moment? They make a lot of money, they're left to get on with their games, they're one of the few Nintendo-affiliated companies that Nintendo aren't calling every two seconds – and Nintendo put up with their delays. Activision wouldn't put up with *Starfox*'s delay. "



GC'S FIRST TRADITIONAL RPG Ubi Soft are bringing out a compilation RPG adventure to Gamecube. Evolution Worlds will in fact combine two RPGs in one – Evolution: The World of Sacred Device and Evolution 2: Far-Off Promise – both of which appeared on the Dreamcast.

CALIBUR GETS CLEVER In SC's 'Conquest' mode, the CPU will precisely mimic your player's attack patterns, forcing you to change your behaviour and creating a greater challenge. Intriguing.



DISAGREE WITH MOST WANTED? Then email us at **ngc@futurenet.co.uk** or write to us at **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW and tell us the three games you're most looking forward to. Every month, we'll tally up the scores on the doors and change the list accordingly.



MOST WANTED!

Quite simply, the 25 most anticipated games on the Cube in your opinion...



KART MAN!

Last issue we asked for your ideas – and we got them in their thousands. What did you want to see in the new *Mario Kart*? Check out our Ideas Factory on page 48 to see what weapons Mario should have, how the Battle Mode should change, and why Bowser needs to be an end-of-level boss...



1 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

UK 2003 | US 2003 | JAPAN 2003

We told you: it's been a month since the new *Zelda* was unveiled to the world and we're still recovering from the fallout. Cynics will argue that its only undergone a visual change, that, at its heart, beats the same game we played in *Ocarina of Time*. But they're wrong. This'll deliver the brilliance of the N64 *Zeldas*, plus a wealth of new genius. **See it on page 24.**



2 MARIO SUNSHINE

UK SEPT | US 27TH AUG | JAPAN 19TH JULY

Although the team is relatively small – and proceedings unlikely to stretch gamers past the ten-hour mark – this already looks immaculate and, as with anything *Mario*, it plays immaculately. Best of all, it's being lined up for a too-good-to-be-true September release here. **Check out Mazza on 30.**



3 MARIO KART GC

UK 2003/04 | US 2003/04 | JAPAN 2003/04

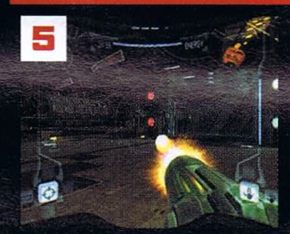
Still a way off, and disappointingly absent at E3 even in video form, *Mario Kart*'s Cube debut exists only as video so far – at least outside of Nintendo of Japan. Inside, Miyamoto's minions are busy building a sequel to the N64 outing – a game we're still playing in the office. **See Ideas Factory on page 48.**



4 PERFECT DARK ZERO

UK 2003/04 | US 2003/04 | JAPAN 2003/04

As-yet unconfirmed super-sequel Rare deny exists but which we all know is taking shape at their Twycross HQ. Rumours of reported problems have been quashed by those in the know, and if this first-person shooter is even half as good as *Perfect Dark* on N64 this'll be the premier Gamecube gun game.



5 METROID PRIME

UK XMAS | US NOV | JAPAN 2003

You can only marvel at what Retro have done with *Metroid Prime*. Six months ago, the brilliance that we saw at E3 would have hardly seemed possible – now this is shaping up as the key FPS for Gamecube. Massive, gorgeous worlds, big bugs, bigger guns and a real mean streak – **get to page 14 for more.**



6 SOUL CALIBUR 2

UK 2003 | US 2003 | JAPAN 2003

The original *Soul Calibur* on Dreamcast was probably the best 3D beat-'em-up ever – which bodes well for this sequel, coming to Gamecube early next year. Early versions look incredible, while the arcade version is exceptional. And shots coming out of Namco suggest things are about to get better.



7 STARFOX ADVENTURES

UK 2002 | US 1ST OCT | JAPAN 2003

Rare's ages-in-development 3D adventure features the original crew from Starfox – minus Falco – in a *Zelda*-esque 3D world inhabited by skyscraper-sized dinos. Looked and moved incredibly at E3, nicking *Zelda*'s battle system and improving upon it, as well as dealing us in with some top-notch space battles.



8 RESIDENT EVIL ZERO

UK 2003 | US NOV | JAPAN SEPT

Like the look of the newly jazzed-up *Resident Evil*? Well, start weeping at the sight of the Gamecube-only *Resident Evil Zero*, built from scratch on Nintendo's dazzling purple wonderbox. A prequel to the original *Resident Evil*, this includes new features, new characters and resolves Umbrella's origins...



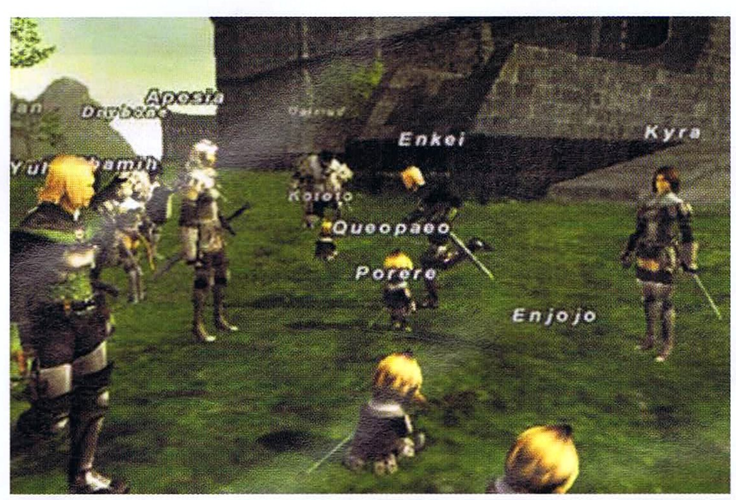
9 F-ZERO GC

UK 2003 | US 2003 | JAPAN 2003

Developed by *Daytona* coders Amusement Vision, *F-Zero GC* is another in a long line of titles Nintendo have shifted to third parties. Fortunately, Sega know how to handle a racing game, and – through unique compatibility with *F-Zero Arcade* – this will offer a new, exciting direction for the series.

No.	Game	Description	UK	US	JAPAN
10	FINAL FANTASY	Way-off all-new *FF* adventure.	2003	2003	2002
11	TUROK EVOLUTION	Sequel-saurus. **More on page 34.**	6TH SEPT	6TH SEPT	2003
12	SUPER MONKEY BALL 2	More monkeys, more minigames.	XMAS	NOV	OCT
13	WARIO WORLD	Wazza-only side-scroller. Unusual.	DEC	NOV	OCT
14	AUTO MODELLISTA	Capcom's top cel-shaded racer.	2003	2003	2003
15	TONY HAWK'S SKATER 4	Same tricks, no time limits.	XMAS	NOV	UNLIKELY
16	TIMESPLITTERS 2	New shooter from *GoldenEye* bods.	SEPT	SEPT	UNLIKELY
17	ETERNAL DARKNESS	Scare-fest. Review next month.	OCT	OUT NOW	2003
18	COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3	PlayStation favourite hits Cube.	2002/03	2002/03	2002/03
19	JAMES BOND: NIGHTFIRE	Eurocom deliver more Bondage.	NOV	NOV	2003
20	1080° 2	Powder-filled 'boarding sequel.	2003	2003	2003
21	KAMEO	Change into animals, Rare-style.	2003	2003	2003
22	WWE X8	New smackdown. **See page 66.**	NOV 2002	OUT NOW	2002
23	DIE HARD VENDETTA	This time it's personnel mines.	NOV	NOV	2003
24	MARIO GOLF	Fairway magic with Mazza.	2003	2003	2003
25	PHANTASY STAR ONLINE	Premier online outing for GC.	2002/03	OCT	JULY

WRITE TO... MAILBOX/NGC/30 MONMOUTH STREET/BATH/BA1 2BW OR EMAIL NGC@FUTURENET.CO.UK







△ Nintendo have wasted no time in putting a warning shot over Square's bows.

FANTASTIC FAILURE

Nintendo boss pulls no punches in reminding Squaresoft that *Final Fantasy* is a costly flop.

Nintendo president Satoru Iwata gave new friends Squaresoft a sharp verbal kick to the kumquats with a stinging criticism of *Final Fantasy XI*.

Speaking at a company conference, Iwata laid the boot into Square's long-awaited, hugely expensive online RPG, after early Japanese sales figures suggested the game would fail to recoup its massive development costs.

"While the popularity of online games is undeniable, *Final Fantasy XI* has been a failure," Iwata told delegates.

"Square have been unable to attain half the number of users they anticipated, due to the management of their online servers."

Players must buy or rent a PS2 hard drive and keyboard, as well as pay a monthly subscription. The expense is a major factor in the game's poor sales.

FALLING OUT AGAIN?

The recently rekindled relationship between Nintendo and Square makes Iwata's statement particularly unexpected. Square's deal with part-owners Sony allows them to bring *FFXI* to Gamecube, and *FF* creator Hironobu Sakaguchi has previously stated that the game *must* appear on multiple formats in order to be a success.

But Iwata may well have put paid to any plans for a Gamecube version of *FFXI* or similar online titles.

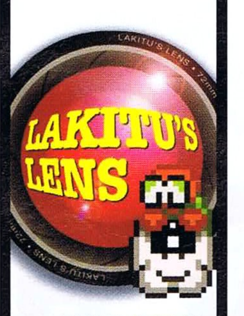
Shocked Square president Youichi Wada responded: "Players have been satisfied with *FFXI*, and we hope Nintendo's comments don't dissuade future players from experiencing the game for themselves."

GROUND-BREAKING

Square's forthcoming offline *Final Fantasy* title for Gamecube is still expected to be released later this year, and Nintendo's departing ex-boss Hiroshi Yamauchi said that he believes the game, which links up with the GBA, will be ground-breaking.

As for online titles in general on Gamecube, Iwata told delegates: "We're paying particular attention to the online environment to ensure the success of future network games." **MK**

DID YOU KNOW? *Final Fantasy* first appeared on the NES in 1987, and had five sequels, all exclusive to Nintendo consoles, before Square turned to the Dark Side in the mid-90s.



MARIO BEEN MENTIONED IN EASTENDERS? SEEN A COPY OF NGC IN CORRIE? LET LAKITU KNOW...







BOY DONE GOOD

"Did any of you see Channel 4 sitcom The Book Group? on Friday 17th May?" asks Stuart Forbes from Berkshire. "Reason being, Rab and "Wee" Jackie were involved in a heated confrontation on ace N64 football game, *ISS '98*! "Wee" Jackie won 5-0, much to Rab's disgust... although neither of them seemed to be holding their controllers properly. Anyway, I've enclosed some pictorial proof."

WRITE TO LAKITU'S LENS, NGC, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

Entries sent with picture evidence will win a Gamecube game...





ZELDA FIGHTER

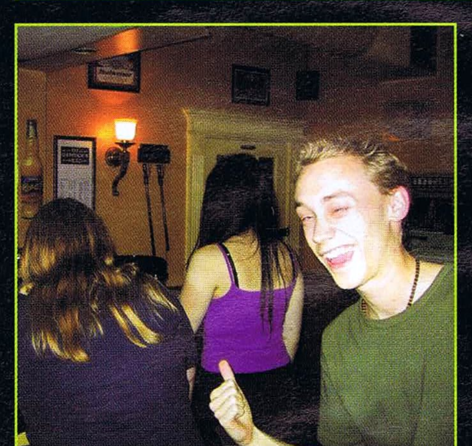
Is Link a secret character in *Soul Calibur 2*?

The rumour factory has been going crazy over this one, with US websites 'revealing' that Namco's forthcoming *Soul Calibur 2* (which Sony claimed at E3 was a PlayStation 2 exclusive – yak) will feature Link as a playable character. And not just any old Link – the game will supposedly have the Adult Link seen in the original Spaceworld 2000 *Zelda* footage. Namco have strenuously denied the rumour, but the company's involvement with the Triforce arcade system means they now have very close ties with Nintendo... **MK**

VIRTUAL REALITY

NINTENDO GAMING MOMENTS 'COME TRUE'.

THIS MONTH Making easy with the ladies, James Bond style...



THE TEST

Sauntering into a suitably suave establishment, Geraint spies a pair of exotic beauties. A simple click of his fingers and one of them will be his. Decision time, Mr Bond.



RESULT

Crushed larynx, multiple fractures, and a couple of months sucking hospital food through a straw. Use better judgement next time, Bond.

WIN!! PLAY TUROK EVOLUTION FIRST!

It's the last month of our exclusive *Turok* compo! And, to celebrate, we're giving you the sixth and final jigsaw piece 'free'. Kind of us, eh?

Way back in **NGC**/65, we kicked off one our most exciting compos ever. In a world-exclusive tie-up with *Turok* brains Acclaim, we gave one lucky **NGC** reader and a friend the opportunity to travel across to the US and play *Turok Evolution* at coders Acclaim before anyone else got a sniff of it.

Sound good? Damn straight.

But, we weren't about to make it easy. In issue 65 we provided you with an airline ticket that had six gaps on it: the six gaps could be filled by pieces of a jigsaw… and there's been a piece in each of the issues between 65 and this one, hidden away somewhere, ooooooh, devilishly difficult.

If you've picked up the last six issues of **NGC**, you'll know that all you need to do is stick the six pieces of the jigsaw onto your air ticket and send it in to stand a chance of winning a dream trip to the States. If you've missed an issue, then you better get onto our back issues hotline (although we've reprinted the ticket below in case you've lost it). Call **0870 444 8653** without hesitation!

The closing date for entries is Thursday 1st August. All you have to do once you've completed your air ticket is answer our tie breaker up to the left here. We'll contact the winner shortly after – and then you'll be off, with a friend, to Austin to play the unbelievably good *Turok Evolution*…

TIE BREAKER

Completed your card? Got all six pieces of the jigsaw? Then all you need to do is answer the following tie breaker on a separate piece of paper…

WHAT NINTENDO PERIPHERAL WAS *TUROK 2: SEEDS OF EVIL* THE FIRST GAME TO MAKE USE OF?

RULES

1. The closing date for all entries is 1st August 2002.

2. The competition is open to all UK and Republic. of Ireland residents except employees of the Future Publishing, Acclaim, any of its wholly owned subsidiaries, marketing services agencies, handling houses or other companies involved directly with the administration of this competition.

3. All entries must be sent to: 'I want Turok 'n' roll!', **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. All entries must be sent by prepaid post and received by 1st August, irrespective of the date of posting. Proof of posting won't be deemed to be proof of delivery.

4. Any entry that is incomplete, illegible, late or otherwise does not comply with the rules may be deemed invalid by the terrifying good looking Editor.

5. All entries will be examined.

6. A winner will be chosen on or around 1st August 2002. The winner will be notified by telephone. *Please include a telephone number.*

7. There is no cash alternative to the prize.

8. The Editor's decision on all matters affecting this competition is final.

9. If the prize becomes unavailable for any reason, Future Publishing and Acclaim reserve the right to replace it with another of equal value.

10. If an entrant is under the age of 18, he or she **must** get the signed permission of a parent or guardian before entering. Also, if the winner is under 18, he or she **must** be accompanied on the trip by a parent/guardian. Get the a-okay from your folks before entering.

11. No correspondence will be entered into.

12. The winner of the trip (and their parent/guardian/friend) must be available to fly within three weeks of the closing date. Travel must be completed by 8th September.

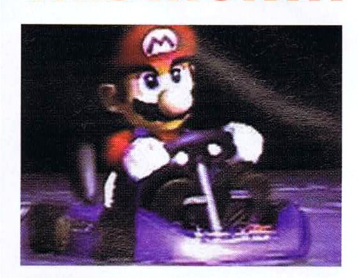
13. The winner will be responsible for ensuring that he or she (and their parent/guardian/friend) has a passport and – if necessary – a visa valid for the trip as well as appropriate travel insurance.

14. Except where caused by their negligence, Future Publishing and Acclaim accept no responsibility for any loss or delay caused by the airline, hotel or other third party or any other loss or damage suffered by the winner (or their parent/guardian/ friend) as a result of winning the trip.

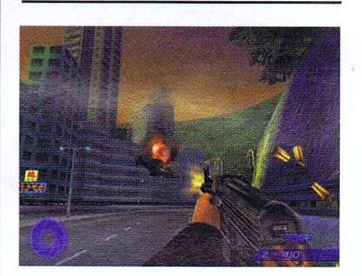
15. The promoter of this competition is Future Publishing. A big thanks to Acclaim for providing the funds for the prize – and time at the development studio.These rules shall be governed by English law.



THIS MONTH



MARIO KART GC
The things you *really* want to see in the sequel. Are you watching, Nintendo? Heck, of course you are, you scamps.
48



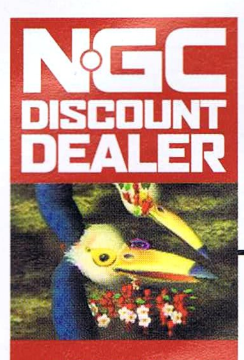
007 AGENT UNDER FIRE
We all knew he'd return eventually, but has 007 left his playability in Twycross? HAS HE?
54





NGC CHARTS

NGC DISCOUNT DEALER

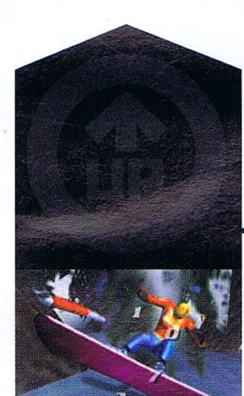


PIK IT OUT!

The guys at nice 'n' cheap website www.play.com have done it again – this time they're offering you *Pikmin* for 35 quid! That's a fiver cheaper than you'll find in the shops, and it even includes postage and packaging. Man alive! Get onto the world wide web and have a gander. We can hardly believe our eyes.



Position	Last Month	Game Name	Price	Score	NGC issue reviewed	Developer/Publisher	Weeks in Chart	Highest Position
1	-	PIKMIN	£40	85	NGC issue 69	Nintendo	3	1
2	-	SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE	£40	72	NGC issue 69	Treyarch/Activision	3	2
3	1	SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE	£40	95	NGC issue 68	Nintendo	10	1
4	2	STAR WARS: ROGUE LEADER	£45	87	NGC issue 68	Factor 5/Activision	10	1
5	3	LUIGI'S MANSION	£40	90	NGC issue 67	Nintendo	10	3
6	-	SSX TRICKY	£40	87	NGC issue 69	EA Big/EA	2	6
7	-	LEGENDS OF WRESTLING	£40	47	NGC issue 69	Acclaim	5	7
8	5	SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE	£40	70	NGC issue 67	Sega/Infogrames	10	5
9	11	SUPER MONKEY BALL	£40	88	NGC issue 67	Sega/Infogrames	10	4
10	10	ISS 2	£40	84	NGC issue 68	Major A/Konami	10	6
11	3	2002 FIFA WORLD CUP	£40	30	NGC issue 69	EA Sports	10	3
12	6	WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM	£40	91	NGC issue 67	NST/Nintendo	10	4
13	9	BURNOUT	£40	86	NGC issue 67	Criterion/Acclaim	10	9
14	-	TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3	£40	87	NGC issue 68	Treyarch/Activision	10	8
15	12	TARZAN FREERIDE	£40	59	NGC issue 67	Disney/Ubi Soft	1	15



TRICK BITE FEVER

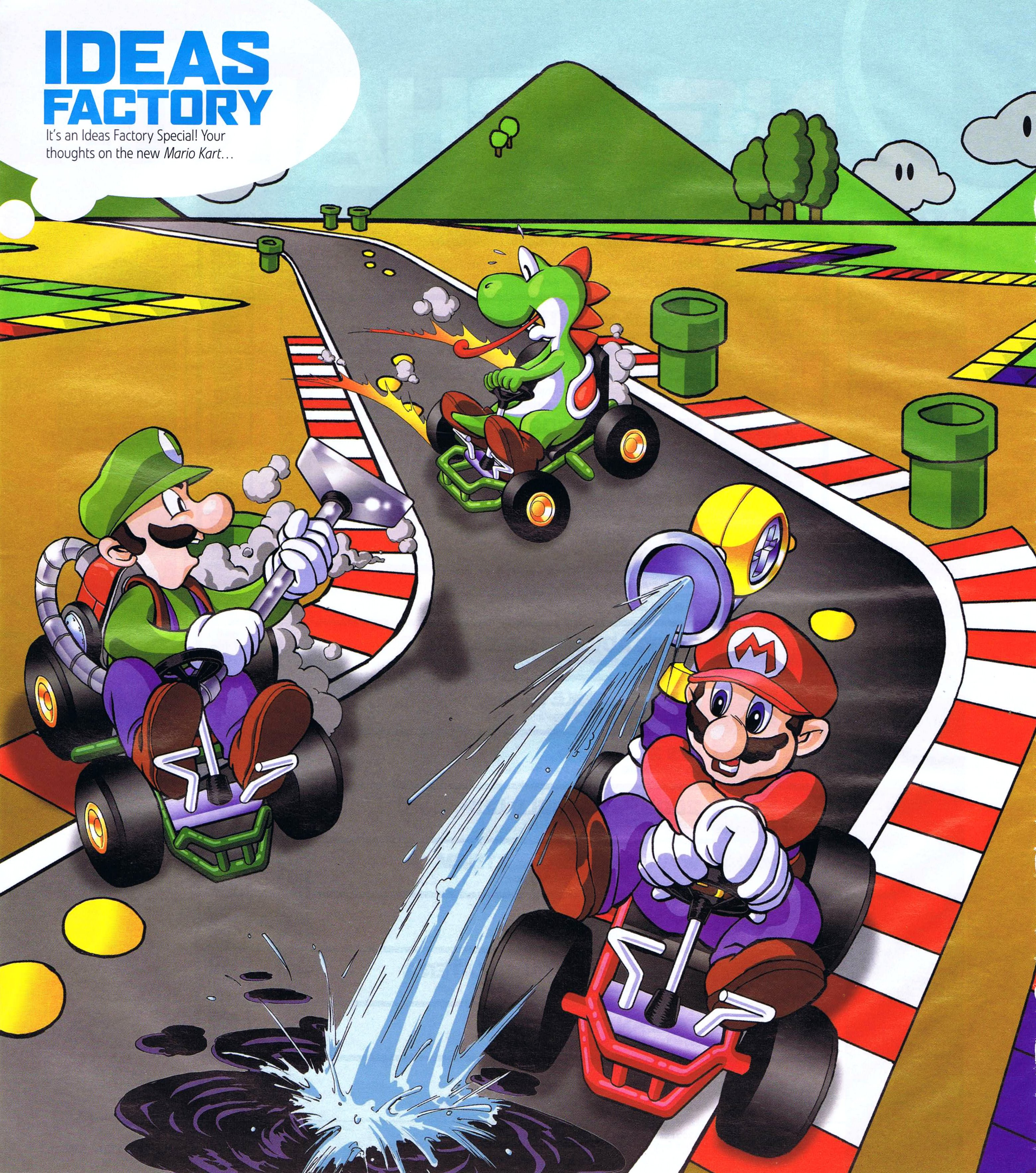
An impressive opening month's business for *SSX Tricky* as it storms in at number six – pretty nifty when you consider what it's up against in the top five. Early indications are that people haven't been too put off by the fact that this is a PS2 conversion. In fact, at our local EB, we were told this has been selling steadily, suggesting *SSX* may hold its position right the way through until next month.



CAUGHT IN THE WEB

After the staggering amount of film marketing that's whizzed across our TV screens in the past month, it's little wonder ths gaming incarnation of Spidey's big screen adventure is doing well. (Coming out on every format under the sun probably helps too.) Does it deserve it? Just about. Will it continue? Almost certainly. Expect a similarly strong showing from *Spider-Man* next month – and if you want to see Spidey's hunting ground for yourself, nip along to our Spider-Compo on page 104.

DID YOU KNOW? Tony Hawk, the greying skate-maniac fronting this month's good-to-moderate performer *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3*, has made £4 million in royalties from the game series.


IDEAS FACTORY
It's an Ideas Factory Special! Your thoughts on the new *Mario Kart*…

LAST MONTH WE ASKED YOU
WHAT CRAZY STUFF DO YOU WANT TO SEE IN THE NEW MARIO KART?

Well, it didn't make the expected appearance at last month's E3 – not even on video – but that hasn't stopped you from sending in *mountains* of ideas for *Mario Kart GC*. So, here they are: NGC reader brainwaves that Shigsy and the boys should be looking to take on board right away…

MARIO KART MUST HAVE…

The things, according to you, *Mario Kart GC* simply can't do without…

MORE CHARACTERS

Mario, Luigi, Wario, Peach, DK, Bowser, Yoshi, Toad and Koopa are definites for *Mario Kart GC* – you mark our words – but would Nintendo wheel out any other characters for their karting fourquel? They proved with *Smash Bros* that they could handle a huge roster of characters.

SPECIFIC WEAPONS

The original *Mario Kart* introduced the idea of character-specific weaponry (remember Toad and Peach's mushrooms or Yoshi's eggs), but *Mario Kart 64* did away with the feature. You want to see it back in place on Cube, as well as sticking with the more traditional armoury, such as shells.

UNLOCKABLE EXTRAS

Mario Kart 64 might have been just about untouchable as a multiplayer game, but as a one-player experience it was a doddle. Which, presumably, is why you want more incentive to stick at the single-player in the Cube version – and that incentive is unlockable tracks and secret characters.

MULTIPLAYER-ONLY COURSES

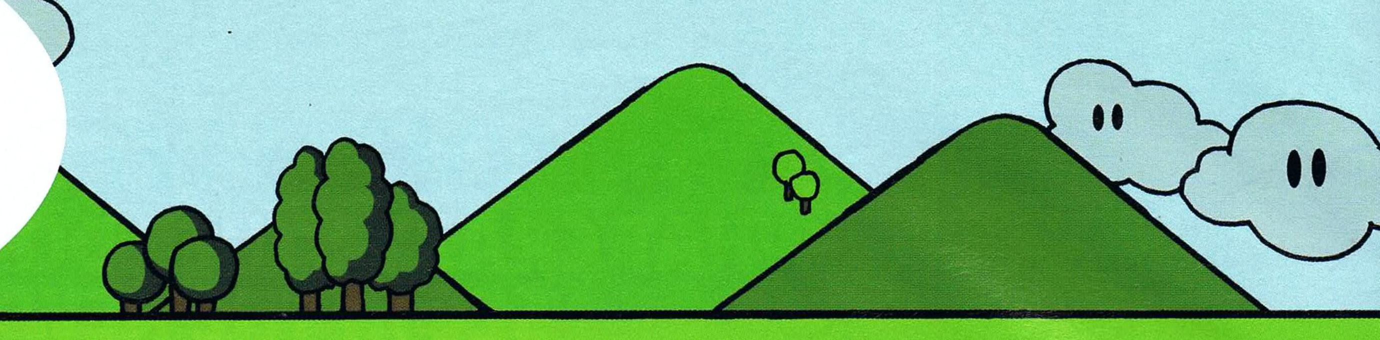
It was the best part of *Mario Kart 64* – and you want more. *Much* more. As well as being able to access all single-player courses, you want the opportunity to belt around multiplayer-exclusive levels, built specifically for the enjoyment of you and up to three other mates.

CREATE FUNCTIONS

Remember *F-Zero X*'s brilliant, *brilliant* random track generator? Well, you want one of those in the new *Mario Kart*, making the game infinitely replayable, but you also want a Create-a-Kart mode, where you can lay down the blueprint for your very own kart and then race the blighter.

IDEAS FACTORY

It's an Ideas Factory Special! Your thoughts on the new *Mario Kart*…



MARIO KART MOUTHPIECE

Twenty-five ideas direct from your brains…



SHIGSY BRAIN GENIE AWARD

1 SPECIFIC VEHICLES

"As well as their karts, each character should have a second vehicle: Mario should ride around on Yoshi's back, Link could gallop along on Epona and Fox would be in the Arwing or Landmaster. You could also have unlockable characters, such as Magikoopa on a broomstick, Captain Falcon in his Blue Falcon, Lakitu on a cloud, Bowser in his clown's-face thing from *Mario World*, and Ash and Pika on Charizard's back! Come on, you know it would be great."

Gary Wells, Northern Ireland
Let us know your address and we'll send out a prize.

2 BUBBLE BATTLE MOD

"As well as the normal Battle Mode games, you should have one where each kart is in a sphere – a bit like *Monkey Ball*. The arenas would be circular, with no barriers, and the object of the game would be to bash into other players and knock them off the arena."
Aaron Wade, Chester

3 DRIVE AS THE GHOST

"What about if, once you'd clocked up a truly world-beating time in Time Trial, you unlocked the Ghost as a playable character? The Ghost would be different depending on what character you played as, and he'd be the ultimate racer, with a perfect racing line."
Joseph Sammarco, Surrey

4 BOSS RACES

"The one-player should have an Adventure Mode, where you get to race big boss characters such as Bowser. One you'd beaten them, you'd unlock them and be able to race as them."
Chris Wetherly, Northampton

5 RELAY MULTIPLAYER GAME

"You'd have to complete laps then pass on a 'baton' – a flag in this case. There'd be two teams made up of two players each, and each player would have to complete two laps. The change over would require precise manoeuvring, while you could use sneaky shortcuts in the race."
Steven Riley, Nottingham

6 GRAND PRIX TEAMS

"The characters should be divided into Grand Prix teams: Team Mario would have Mario, Luigi, Peach and Yoshi, while Team Zelda would have Link, Zelda, Ganon and Sheik. You could even have an evil Team Mario with Wario, Waluigi, Bowser and Magikoopa. Each team would have a set of scenarios like in *Super Smash Bros*, where only some of the drivers can compete; for example, Mario would have to stop Bowser from shunting Peach off the side of a track."
Jak Livesey, Berkshire

7 'SHROOM TEARS

"Toad's specific weapon would be to cry hard, salty tears that arrow off into opponents eyes, temporarily blinding them. Wouldn't that be great?"
Stuart Flint, Margate

8 POKÉWEAPONS

"How about, instead of power-ups like mushrooms and lightning, you collected pokéballs? When you picked one up it would bestow you with the powers of the pokémon inside. So, pick up Pikachu and you could fire off lightning bolts; grab Squirtle and you could drop slippy water bubbles; while picking up a Jigglypuff ball would enable you to send other drivers off to sleep, temporarily locking control of the kart! You could even have rare, unlockable balls, such as Koffing, where you could launch huge great lingering black clouds."
Will McConnell, Belfast

9 LEVEL PLAYING

"There should be a fair few courses set in the Mushroom Kingdom, but there should also be some set elsewhere – maybe one could be inside Luigi's mansion. Or how about real-life locations? Imagine up to 16 karts flying around a high-speed motorway, charging into a city at night…"
Peter Hignett, via email

10 JUMPING

"You should be able to jump onto an opponent's back and briefly control their kart."
Ross Rankin, Cambridge

11 HOOVER HEAVEN

"The Poltergust 3000 should be a hidden weapon. Characters could use any of its functions: the normal hoover would act like a magnet, dragging people towards you; the water function would have people slipping all over the place; fire would make other karters lose control of their kart; and ice would freeze the wheels, sending them sliding."
Will Prendergast, Bracknell

12 A SHELL OF A DIFFERENCE

"I'd like to see a few more uses for the same weapon: for example, if you picked up a shell, you could choose whether to pick off the leader of the current race, or the person currently at the top of the leaderboard. It would add a greater degree of tactics to the game."
Niall Sherry, Dublin

13 FLY, SKI AND SLEDGE

"The new *Mario Kart* should have planes and submarines as well as karts. But, instead of having players choosing different vehicles for the same race (I hated this feature in *Diddy Kong Racing*) you'd *have* to go for boats, planes or sledges on certain levels."
Matthew McWhinnie, via email

14 TRACK EDITOR

"Nintendo should include a Track Editor in *Mario Kart GC*. You could adjust the default courses as well as edit the frequency of the power-ups and the length of the tracks."
David Taylor, London

15 COINING IT

"Once a character has collected enough coins, they should be able to access a secret weapon."
Ryan Hubbard, Leicester

16 MORPHING LEVELS

"*Mario Kart GC* should nick the morphing Mewtwo idea from *Super Smash Bros Melee*. Once you pick up a Mewtwo pokéball, parts of the track could change – from rocks to streams, and so on – making the drive more exciting and unpredictable. Whoever picks up the Mewtwo power-up has the advantage, though, as an arrow appears to guide them through the new sections of the track."
David Grice, West Bromwich

17 PEACH'S HUB

There should be an adventure mode, and the hub should be set outside and inside Peach's castle."
Gareth Thomas, Solihull

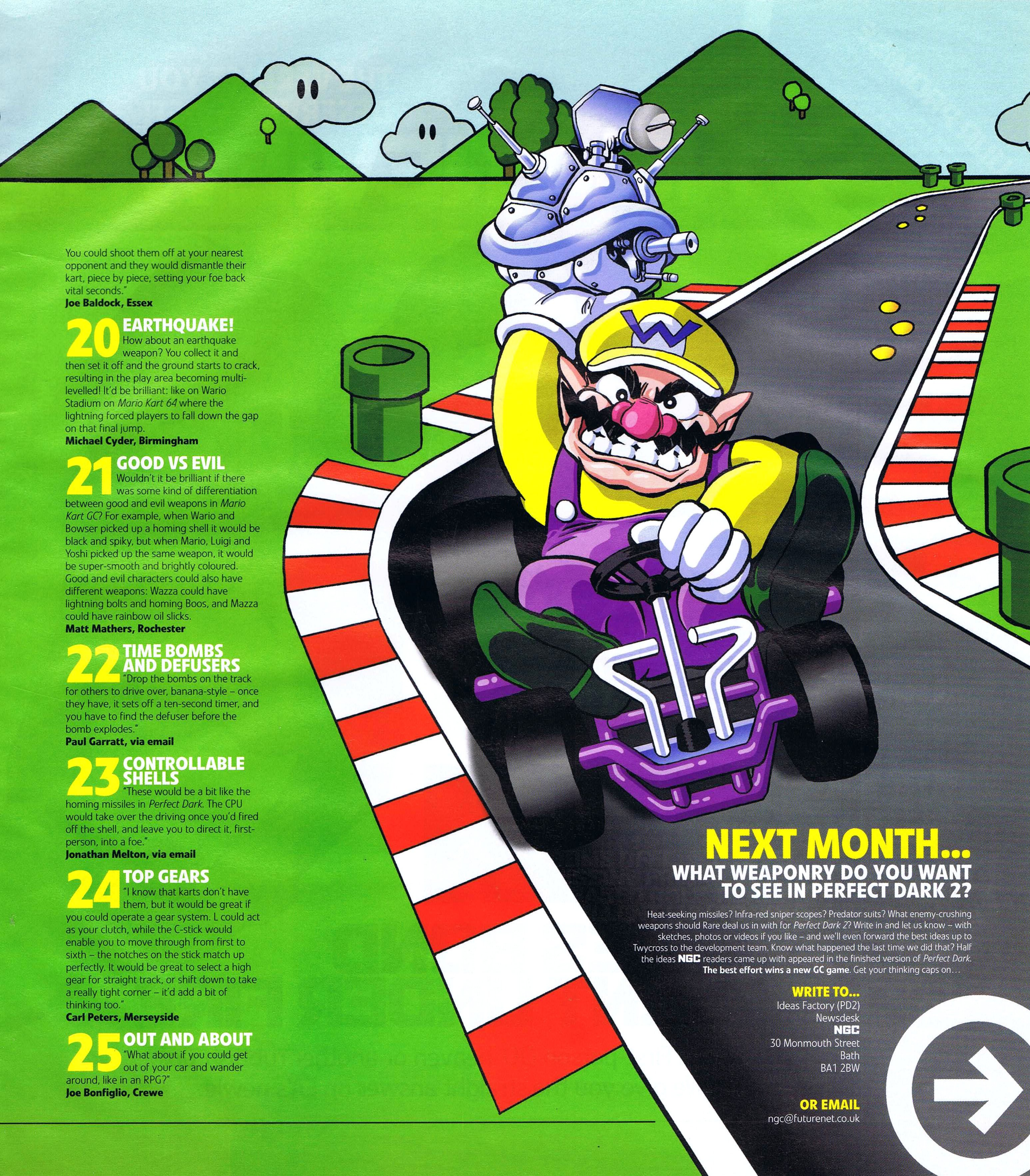
18 UPGRADEABLE KARTS

"The coins you collect in races can be tallied up and then spent on upgrading your kart in the areas where there are deficiencies. So, Bowser could crank up the speed on his."
Mikey Lland, Strathclyde

19 PIKMIN POWER

"One of the new weapons should be a swarm of pikmin.

Thanks to everyone who wrote in with their ideas – the response was phenomenal. You included: Morgan Morris, Powys; James Castleton, Norwich; C-Dude, via email; Neale McGeever, Tyne & Wear; Pierre Hyde, Welwyn Garden City; Grant Liddell, Scotland; Matthew Payne, Glasgow; Ed Day, Swindon; Steve Soar, Pilling; Andrew Keagle, Solihull; Tony Jenkins, via email; Ben Davey, Bristol; Olly Parry-Jones, via email; Lee Machin, Manchester; Alex Cavey, via email; David Stazicker, Wigan; Fraz Handzel, Wembley; Derek Welbeck, London; William Purvis, via email; Pete Millwood, via email; Fiona Loxton, Milton Keynes; Peter Jewson, Bromsgrove; Chris Tabor, Stockport; Brian Chant, Southampton; Michael Murphy, Ireland; Ray, Stoke; Sam Majerski, London; Kevin Hume, Orkney; Neil Holmes, Doncaster; Thomas Armstrong, via email.



You could shoot them off at your nearest opponent and they would dismantle their kart, piece by piece, setting your foe back vital seconds."
Joe Baldock, Essex

20 EARTHQUAKE!

How about an earthquake weapon? You collect it and then set it off and the ground starts to crack, resulting in the play area becoming multi-levelled! It'd be brilliant: like on Wario Stadium on *Mario Kart 64* where the lightning forced players to fall down the gap on that final jump.
Michael Cyder, Birmingham

21 GOOD VS EVIL

Wouldn't it be brilliant if there was some kind of differentiation between good and evil weapons in *Mario Kart GC*? For example, when Wario and Bowser picked up a homing shell it would be black and spiky, but when Mario, Luigi and Yoshi picked up the same weapon, it would be super-smooth and brightly coloured. Good and evil characters could also have different weapons: Wazza could have lightning bolts and homing Boos, and Mazza could have rainbow oil slicks.
Matt Mathers, Rochester

22 TIME BOMBS AND DEFUSERS

"Drop the bombs on the track for others to drive over, banana-style – once they have, it sets off a ten-second timer, and you have to find the defuser before the bomb explodes."
Paul Garratt, via email

23 CONTROLLABLE SHELLS

"These would be a bit like the homing missiles in *Perfect Dark*. The CPU would take over the driving once you'd fired off the shell, and leave you to direct it, first-person, into a foe."
Jonathan Melton, via email

24 TOP GEARS

"I know that karts don't have them, but it would be great if you could operate a gear system. L could act as your clutch, while the C-stick would enable you to move through from first to sixth – the notches on the stick match up perfectly. It would be great to select a high gear for straight track, or shift down to take a really tight corner – it'd add a bit of thinking too."
Carl Peters, Merseyside

25 OUT AND ABOUT

"What about if you could get out of your car and wander around, like in an RPG?"
Joe Bonfiglio, Crewe

NEXT MONTH...

WHAT WEAPONRY DO YOU WANT TO SEE IN PERFECT DARK 2?

Heat-seeking missiles? Infra-red sniper scopes? Predator suits? What enemy-crushing weapons should Rare deal us in with for *Perfect Dark 2*? Write in and let us know – with sketches, photos or videos if you like – and we'll even forward the best ideas up to Twycross to the development team. Know what happened the last time we did that? Half the ideas **NGC** readers came up with appeared in the finished version of *Perfect Dark*. **The best effort wins a new GC game**. Get your thinking caps on…

WRITE TO…
Ideas Factory (PD2)
Newsdesk
NGC
30 Monmouth Street
Bath
BA1 2BW

OR EMAIL
ngc@futurenet.co.uk



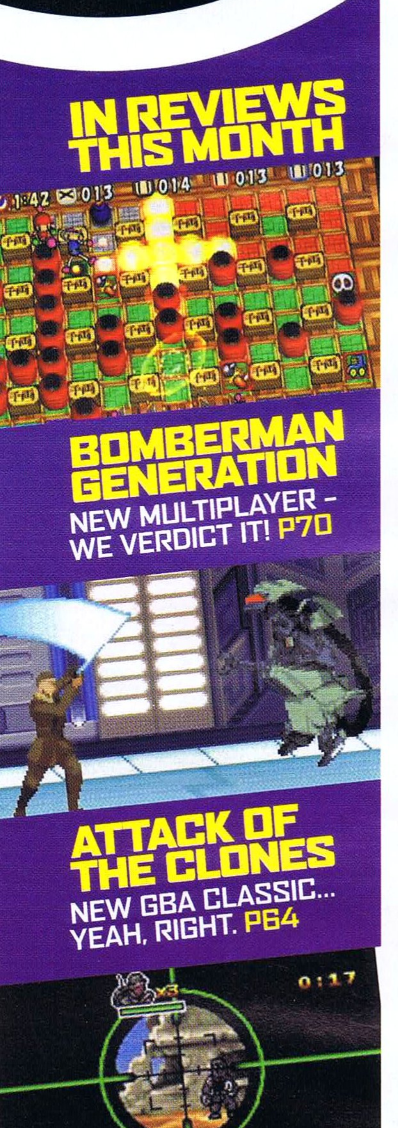
OUR PROMISE

Our reviewers are the most talented and knowledgeable Nintendo fans in the business. We don't only play games at work – we play them at home too, just like you. We ensure that we've played games through to the end so that we can give you a proper verdict – and one that saves you from wasting money.

THE VERDICT YOU DESERVE – FIRST!

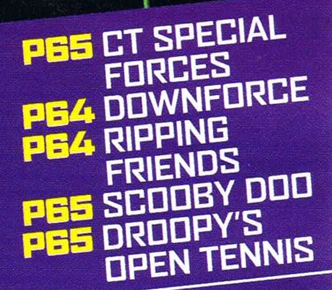
NGC REVIEWS

IN REVIEWS THIS MONTH



BOMBERMAN GENERATION
NEW MULTIPLAYER – WE VERDICT IT! P70

ATTACK OF THE CLONES
NEW GBA CLASSIC... YEAH, RIGHT. P64



P65 CT SPECIAL FORCES
P64 DOWNFORCE
P64 RIPPING FRIENDS
P65 SCOOBY DOO
P65 DROOPY'S OPEN TENNIS

WHAT IS PAL?
PAL is the UK's broadcasting standard. When you buy a Cube here it will be PAL. When you buy a Cube in the US or Japan it'll be NTSC – a different broadcasting standard, and the reason the two don't mix. Import games are NTSC games.

WARNING! DON'T SPLASH CASH UNTIL YOU'VE READ NGC'S REVIEWS!

JAMES BOND AGENT UNDER FIRE

Bang on! First-person 00-heaven or another rubbish *GoldenEye* clone? We give you the straight answer on EA's newie… P54

HOW IT WORKS...

Our reviews are the biggest, most comprehensive on Planet Earth. We devote more pages to the games you want to know about, and give you more detail than anyone else. And in the new **NGC** things have just got a whole lot better: our Field of Play and Event-o-meter regulars will pinpoint exactly when and where games get good, and yet our verdicts remain the most honest and most stringent around.



LOST KINGDOMS

Card-based RPG that might just surprise you – we give you the first review on P60



WWE X8

Import review! We grab hold of the US version of the latest rassle-fest and drain every last detail out of its sweaty pants... P66

1 GET INTO THE GAME

The quickest and smartest way to get started...






2 FIELD OF PLAY

The game's best bit taken apart and analysed...

3 EVENT-O-METER

The good bits, the bad bits – all in a handy graph...



4 THE SCORE BAR

The verdict explained for you...




PROS AND CONS

Because we think it's important to provide you with balanced reviews, we'll sum up the game simply with plus and minus points.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Not all games are good (unsurprisingly) – so you'll be wanting to know what the alternative is. We'll provide suggestions here.

VISUALS AND SOUNDS

Gamecube sends PS2 packing. Do the visuals and sounds show this?

MASTERY

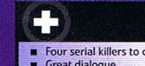
How well does the game make use of the Cube's startling hardware?

LIFESPAN

Will it last you a lifetime or a couple of minutes? Here you'll find out for sure...

VERDICT

We don't throw scores around – we give a game what it deserves. Here you will find the definitive verdict on whether you should purchase a game.






5 OUR SCORING SYSTEM

What those scores mean to you...

NGC STAR GAME

0-24	25-49	50-74	75-89	90+
Crushingly awful, massively dull. Rest assured, this is crud.	Disappointing, stashed with faults and likely to be short of any quality.	Some great bits, some not-so-great bits. Decent but definitely problems.	Great fun, brilliantly programmed at times, but probably flawed.	Rarely awarded, you'll know a 90+ is absolutely essential.

MEET THE NGC TEAM

As any superspy knows, gadgets mean glory and disguises mean distinguish... er... ment. Ahem.

Rubbish team photo manipulation by Tim Weaver.



TIM
So... 99p rainbow glasses. "Wrong," says Tim. "MI6 call them ultra-polarisers." Cough. "Or, er, just... 99p rainbow glasses."



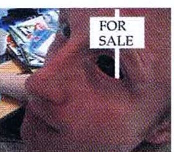
JUDFREY
More M-16 than MI6, Jud's identity has been concealed due to the graphic nature of his loft space. And the fact that he's a nutter.



KITTSY
A dracula costume, Kittsy? This better be good. "It is. You can't tell it's me and now I'm called Mr Kiss Kiss Fang Fang!" (Silence).



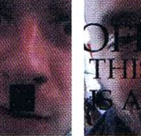
GERAINT
Thanks to the unique moisture in the Welsh valleys, Geraint is able to restructure his face using only the hands of Leek Children.



PAUL
... beepbeepbeep...



DAN
"Yeah, yeah, I'm a camp Hitler – ha ha flamin' ha. You lot are going to feel the back of my hand. If my limp wrist can support it."



JES
"I've got one thing to say to you: face fur. MI6's foes crumble at the merest touch of my 'beard'. Touch it. Go on, TOUCH IT!"



PHILLIP
New recruit Phillip is a quiet man – quiet but deadly. Like dog turd. "I'm glad you made that dog turd analogy. No, wait a second..."




MARK
"No chessboard sweater to confuse 'em this time," says Mark. "Just oodles of comedy hair and a Gerry Adams beard."

"Enemies take a full clip in the face without flinching"

ENEMIES
Your bog-standard idiots. There are only a handful of different types, too, so you'll never have to deal with anything too taxing or unpredictable.

COMBUSTIBLES
Explodeable things are everywhere and they really do help. Always look out for pressure valves, barrels, fire extinguishers and the like, to cause the enemy as much grief as possible.

YOUR GUN
Rather unsatisfying, to be honest – but you do have a fair range at your disposal. The best all-round weapon is the instantly lethal Frinsei shotgun.

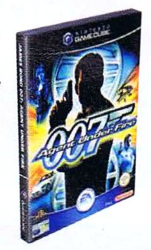
LIFE METER
If this runs out you're in serious trouble (ie, dead), although there's always plenty of body armour to pick up in every level for added protection.

GADGETS
A good selection of toys to play with including the pretty useful Q Claw. You can cycle through these (and the weapons) using the D-pad.

INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	EA
PUBLISHER	EA
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	3
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	NO
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	YES

WHEN'S IT OUT? *Agent Under Fire* is out now on PAL, or on US import if you prefer.



COST: £40

JAMES BOND 007 AGENT UNDER FIRE

A weak Bond? A timely return to the days of *GoldenEye* or another stinker of a 007 licence with guns that fire ping-pong balls?

GET INTO THE GAME
Being a superspy isn't as hard as you'd think…

TRAINING MODE
Agent Under Fire is ridiculously easy to get to grips with. Right from the word go you'll have either Q or M wittering in your ear every step of the way, and telling you exactly what to do. So much for being the world's most respected superspy.

DIFFICULTY LEVELS
Still, if you're having trouble getting to grips with the game's finer points, there are plenty of difficulty levels to help you get used to things.



It seems strangely fitting that the first first-person shooter to appear on Gamecube should be a Bond game, but let us crush from the start any hopes you might have had for this latest attempt at ousting Rare's world-conquering N64 classic: *Agent Under Fire* isn't the new *GoldenEye*. But, then, what is? EA's (and developer Eurocom's) last attempt to put us in Bond's shoes in *TWINE* was the perfect example – it was excellent, solid, enjoyable but nowhere near as good as you-know-what. And, sadly, EA's second attempt, *Agent Under Fire*, is much the same story.

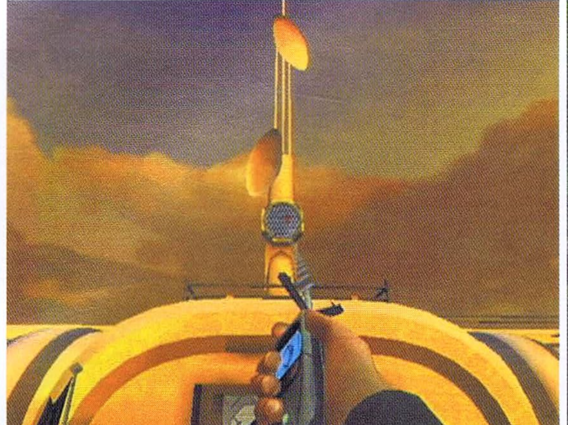
MISSION FAILURE?
Still, if you don't go into it expecting *GoldenEye* – and you won't if you've already played the rather lacklustre PS2 version –



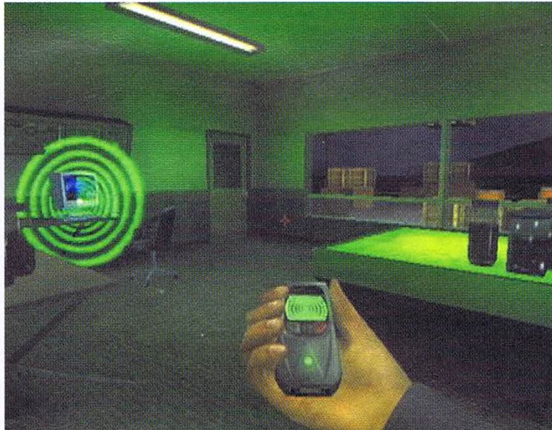
COMES IN BEIGE
For some inexplicable reason, EA have decided to make Bond's default weapon the Golden Gun – or at least, a golden gun. Well, actually it's more a beige gun. What we want to know is why in the name of Desmond Llewelyn doesn't it offer one-shot kills like it's supposed to? Why didn't they just give Bond his proper PPK? Idiots.

INSPECTOR GADGET

Where would Bond be without toys? Right in the dwang most likely – in *AuF*, most are concealed within a whiz-bang new multifunctional device called a 'mobile phone'…



Q-CLAW
Look around for a suitable grappling point and activate it. Hit the right spot, and you'll propel yourself over chasms and up walls.



Q-REMOTE
When you see one of these spirally green lights you can download data to remotely control anything from room temperature to Harrier jump jets.



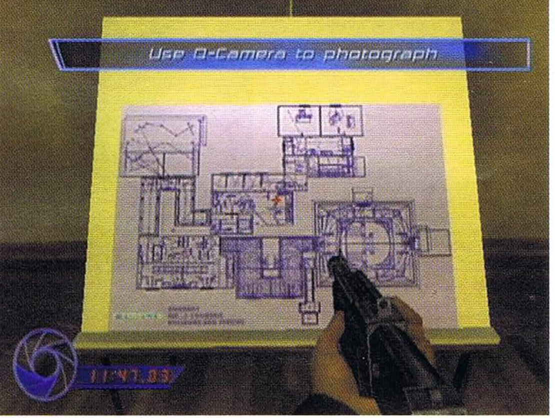
Q-DECRYPTOR
Pretty basic. If there's a door with a combination lock you can use the decoder to get into places you otherwise wouldn't be able to reach.



Q-LASER
Want to go skulking through air ducts? Then you want the Q-Laser. Whip it out and burn the locks off of whatever it is you want to crawl through.



Q-SPECS
We love this one. Put on these natty shades and seek out any secret rooms with their X-ray capabilities. Don't seem to work on ladies' skirts.



Q-CAMERA
On some levels you'll be required to seek out sensitive documentation that has been carelessly strewn around the level. Snap them with this.

you'll find that its many problems are, for the most part, easily forgiven. And, after that, *AuF* becomes pretty enjoyable stuff.

Variety, as they say, is the spice of life, and in *AuF*'s case, it's what's *saved* its life. When you're faced with a main game of varying quality, it's always helpful to paper over the cracks of mediocrity by giving the player something different to chew on every couple of missions – and this is exactly what EA have done. You see, *AuF* has three main gaming 'styles' to get to grips with: the standard run, strafe and shoot FPS sections, *Virtua Cop*-style on-rails episodes and (best of all) the free-roaming driving missions, all of which serve to keep you on your toes and are still largely good fun in their own right – while they last. What you'll spend most of your time on, of course, are the FPS sections, and it's probably for this reason

> **"VARIETY, AS THEY SAY, IS THE SPICE OF LIFE – IN AGENT UNDER FIRE'S CASE, IT'S WHAT'S SAVED ITS LIFE…"**

that you bought the game in the first place.

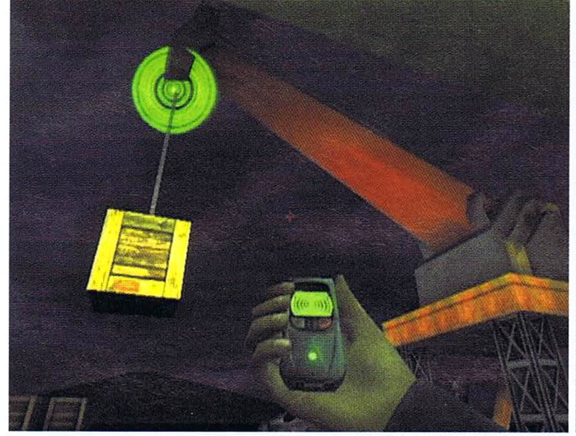
Everything you'd expect from a Bond shooter is included. Each scenario is broken down into a number of objectives, Bond has a healthy selection of gadgets, from lasers to decoders, and there's a fairly decent selection of weapons to choose from, too. The mission objectives are all pretty uninspired as a rule – stealthy data retrieval; find documents and return them; rescue hostages; infiltrate heavily armed installation through the 'back door' and so on and so forth – nothing particularly inventive.



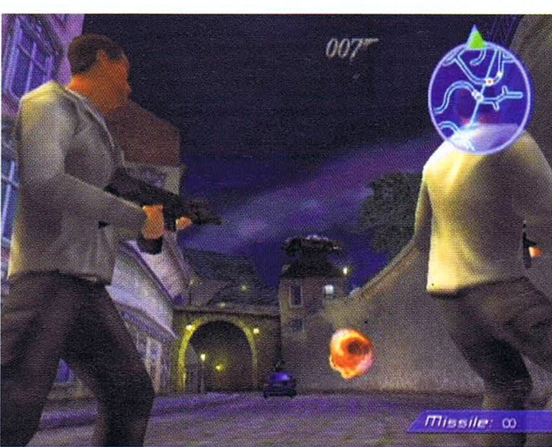
"Most of the guns seem to fire low-velocity ping-pong balls"

BONDY BONUS

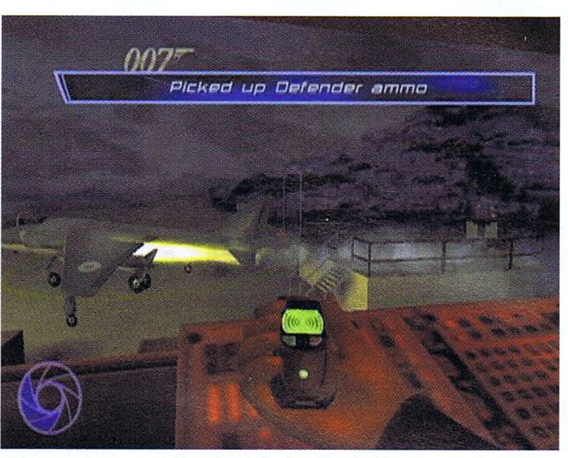
In order to get the top ranking on each level you'll need to indulge in proper Bond-style action. Defeat enemies with chilling, Connery-like efficiency or pull off some death-defying Brosnan-style superspy stuntage and you'll be rewarded handsomely…



Check the surroundings and use anything you find to your advantage – in this case, you can drop crates onto the heads of unsuspecting enemies.



Roadblocks getting in your way? Try flying over them in your posh motor. Do it right and that all-important gold medal is yours for keeps.



This one's dead smart. Download the data for the Harrier and you can activate the engines to fry any enemies that are causing you bother.



△ The oil-rig level is one of the most imaginative, with plenty of gun turrets and sneaky sniping opportunities.







△ Not too shabby looking is it? It runs very smoothly too, but unfortunately it never really excels in any area, either. Shame.

Preventing you from succeeding is the usual band of mentally-deficient losers who roll and sidestep out of the way of your bullets, or just stand there and take a full clip in the back without flinching before spraying the room with wildly inaccurate gunfire. In order to dispatch these cretins, you have at your disposal a clutch of disappointingly weedy weaponry. This point can't be laboured enough: the weaponry in *AuF* is rubbish. A lack of inspiration is one thing; feeling about as meaty as a kipper is something else entirely different. There are certainly plenty of guns to get to grips with, but – how can we put it? – they're just so *dull* to use. They have more in common with potato-spraying feather dusters than kick-ass harbingers of doom and destruction. There's no meaty rumble to accompany the bursts of fire, the targets you hit don't jolt about in pain sufficiently to satisfy your death-lust and, just to add insult to injury, most of the guns fire what appear to be low-velocity ping-pong balls, which travel slowly enough for enemies to dodge. You don't want to *see* the actual bullets, you just want to watch them hurt enemies for crying in a bucket! Even *GoldenEye*'s crappy Klobb would look like the world's most deadly weapon amongst the arsenal on offer here.



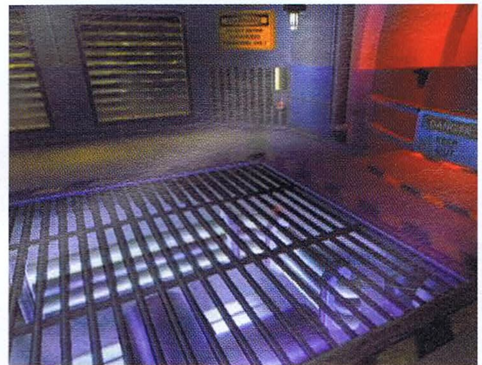
WATER SURPRISE

After GoldenEye's twin Facility combo of urinals and bullets, no Bond game would be complete without at least a little bathroom action. In this instance Bond appears to be creeping up on a Bucharest beauty taking a shower. Little does he know that it is in fact R playing tricks on him with some holo-imaging. The cheeky, balding old coot.

Fortunately, there's more to *AuF* than just gunnery and the welcome diversion of some driving action steps in at just the right time.

EASY DRIVER

The on-rails sections are technically under the 'driving' banner as you're always in a vehicle of some sort, but it's the free-roaming driving bits that really do it for us. Playing a little like a cross between *Spy Hunter* and *Crazy Taxi*, you're required to drive around bustling city streets, going from location to location destroying enemy vehicles and racing to mission-critical checkpoints. Most impressive of all is the fact that, sub-sections though they are, these missions are actually *extremely* accomplished in their own right and make supposedly dedicated driving games such as *Spy Hunter* look dreadful in comparison. The



△ Just look at all that lovely grille- and pipe-work. The background detail in *AuF* is certainly commendable.



△ These guys are the toughest you'll face in *AuF*. Not only are they strong but they have nasty rapid-fire guns.



FIELD OF PLAY

Find out why Bond's still the best when it comes to first-person gunishment…

REMOTE CONTROL

These pop up all over the shop. You can download data and then activate various controls, often with helpful (sometimes devastating) results. Always keep your eyes peeled for any potential uses this device might have.

SNIPE ACTION

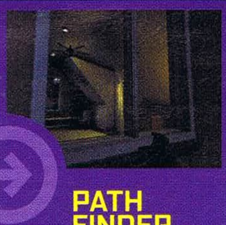
You mightn't be able to zoom in and out like in GoldenEye*, but picking off faraway guards with a well-placed headshot is still as much fun as you'd expect. In this instance there are groups of them sweeping the level below using laser-sights. If you don't shoot well you'll never make it across the level alive.*

handling itself is very simple, allowing you to power-slide round tight corners with ease, giving you plenty of opportunity to concentrate on the more important stuff, like turning the streets into a raging, rocket-fuelled inferno – we never thought we'd say but *these driving sections work a treat.*

"THE FREE-ROAMING DRIVING BITS ARE VERY ACCOMPLISHED – MAYBE EVEN THE BEST BITS OF THE GAME"

Despite being the weakest of all the playing styles, the on-rails sections are still fairly enjoyable in their own right (well, the first time round at any rate). They're *Virtua Cop*-style missions where you're in a vehicle of some sort, such as a tank or a monorail cart – you have to simply move your sight around the screen wasting bad guys as quickly as possible until the ride is over (or you get a bullet in the face). Thankfully, these sections are few and far between and so never become intrusive or tedious. Their purpose is simple: they offer a welcome break from all the madness and frustration of the first-person shooting sections.

Visually speaking, there's nothing to complain about. While the locations hardly boast a wealth of texture detail, the levels run smoothly and at an impressive rate of knots, there's plenty of opportunity for sneaking about and sniping folk in the head, and the level design is sufficiently varied to stop you getting that feeling of déjà-vu further through the adventure.



PATH FINDER

Unfortunately, there's not much scope for taking a quick diversion in Agent Under Fire. There are invisible walls and locked doors aplenty that keep any kind of spontaneous exploration down to a minimum. It also helps reinforce that feeling that you're always being led by the hand at every turn – the exact opposite of the classy GoldenEye.

MISSION COMPLETE

Ignore the fact – if you can – that this isn't *GoldenEye*, and that the guns are crushingly disappointing and *Agent Under Fire* is largely good fun to play first time round. It's certainly on a par with anything N64 Bond game *TWINE* had to offer – though probably lacks the invention and surprise of that game, the reason *TWINE* would arguably still score higher than this. Certainly, it's difficult to say there's anything particularly offensive about *AuF* – though the guns are far from satisfying – it's just that it doesn't really try hard

BATTLE OF THE BONDS

Okay, silencers on, folks – it's comparison time. Despite being over five years old, *GoldenEye* has held its place as the world's finest 007 game. So, how do the two match up?

OPENING

GOLDENEYE

Inspired. Giving you the sniper rifle within the first 30 seconds was a stroke of genius, making you feel like you were filling Bond's shoes right from the start.

AGENT UNDER FIRE

You get to sneak in right at the start, which is fairly Bond-like, we suppose, but having Q wittering in your ear and leading you by the hand certainly isn't.

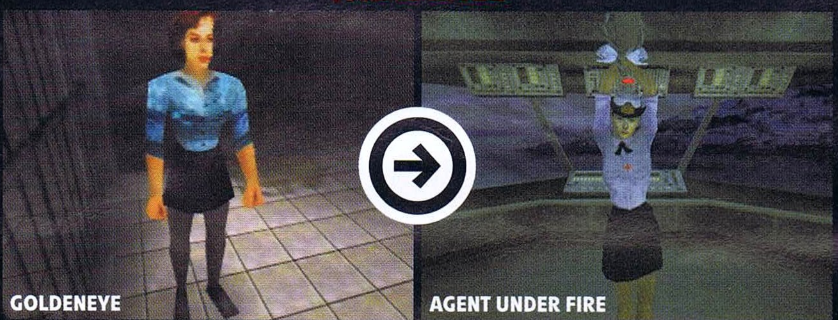
ENEMIES



Kindly let you shoot their helmets off before reacting to you. They also possessed a number of routines depending on where you blasted them.

Graphically more advanced (obviously) but not the sharpest tools in the box. Not enough death animations either – and, of course, there's no Jaws or Coltrane to kill.

THE LADIES



Natalya, Mayday and Xenia. Xenia wasn't bad but the other two looked like they'd been attacked by a trowel. The N64 certainly wasn't ideal for lady physique.

Thanks to the power of GC, the ladies scrub up quite well, and this Bond spends more time 'getting to know' the girls than the steely, frigid one from *GoldenEye*.

ARSENAL



RCP-90! AR33! Magnum! The rip-roaring, palm-numbing violence was enough to satisfy even Jud's normally insatiable taste for bloody, lead-pumping justice.

Weak at best. Feels like you're spraying Murray Mints at enemies, who just get slightly irritated rather than die in a hail of lead like they're supposed to. Rubbish.

MULTIPLAYER



No contest here. It might have been an afterthought on Rare's part but it still stands up as one of the finest multiplayer experiences *ever*. Simple as that.

It's smooth and passable – nothing more. The arenas don't stand up as well, but the poor range of weapons unwittingly increases the longevity of the experience.

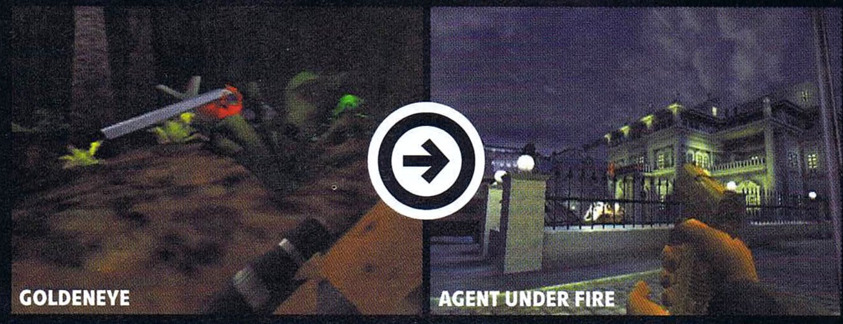
VEHICLES



GoldenEye falls flat on its face here. It had the tank, but they were hardly the most enjoyable levels, and there was no insane Bond-car action in there at all.

AuF's finest achievement. A couple of Beemers, an Aston Martin, a tank (on-rails) and a monorail cart to give you those essential, high-speed Bond thrills.

LOCATIONS



Not the most exotic, but the internal levels are still wildly different in design. Did a remarkable job of making you feel like a jet-setting secret agent.

Pretty damn good, actually. The streets of Bucharest are yours to wreak havock in, there's an aircraft carrier, a secret underwater base and a towering oil rig.

FINALÉ



The Cradle was pretty rubbish, really, and Trevelyan could take multiple bullets to the face without dying. But, you also got the breathtaking Aztec level after.

Has everything you'd expect from a Bond end-level. Sniping, rescuing world leaders, all taking place in missile silos high in some snowcapped mountains at sunset.

JAMES BOND 007: AGENT UNDER FIRE

EA try their hand at *GoldenEye*... and fail

NGC EVENT-O-METER

The ups and downs of life as a superspy...

One of those games that starts off a little disappointingly but then slowly improves as you progress. And once the single player's finished, you can always have a blast at the multiplayer with your mates.

HIGH POINT
Driving
Particularly good fun to play and makes a welcome change from skulking down corridors wasting dumb enemies. Nicely done.

LOW POINT
Helping hands
The tedium of being guided round the middle of the game. There isn't enough innovation to make this anything but above average.



- Smart driving levels.
- Easy to pick up.
- It's got the feel of a proper Bond game.



- No invention at all.
- The weapons are absolutely rubbish.
- More driving levels!



IF YOU LIKE THIS...
GoldenEye
Nintendo
NGC/9 94%
Without argument, the best Bond game in the world. Ever.



8 VISUALS
Silky-smooth, but a little lacking in textures. Overall, pretty sweet.

7 SOUNDS
Usual Bond themes and decent voice-acting. FX could be better though.

6 MASTERY
Runs smoothly enough – but it's hardly pushing the boat out.

6 LIFESPAN
Can be tough on harder settings but simply not interesting enough.

VERDICT

Punctuated with some smart moments, as well as the excellent driving sections – but too often let down by a lack of invention.



NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING

70

△ **The first of the on-rails levels you'll encounter in *AuF*.**

△ **Crawling through vents is an extremely regular occurrence.**

△ **Take it! This particular level feels like a classic Bond chase as you wind your way through a network of underwater tunnels after a murderous nutter intent on world domination.**

SHOTGUN

***Here it is then.** The only weapon worth wielding in Agent Under Fire. The main reason being that it's the only gun that makes guards look like they've been shot. While under fire from any other piece in your arsenal, they simply stand and gawp at you as you pump them full of lumps of hot lead. You've got to say that it's very disappointing indeed.*

enough – everything peaks at acceptable and rarely goes beyond. All the ingredients are there, but EA haven't really tried to go that extra mile. They haven't tightened up the visuals, the enemy AI, the weapons or the level design, so all you're left with is something that looks okay, sounds okay and plays okay. And okay isn't good enough.

If you're a massive Bond fan and you found *TWINE* enjoyable, then you'll still get quite a lot out of this. The addition of multiple skill levels and score-based medal rankings, for example, offer some incentive to play on, as they unlock further treats for the competent multiplayerist. However, if you find yourself disinterested after an hour or so, chances are you won't return to *AuF*.

An inspiring, and engaging first-person shooter in the mould of Rare's classic this ain't, and, more relevantly, come this September when *Turok* and *Timesplitters 2* hit the shelves this will be all but forgotten. But it's still good enough to keep you going if you can accept it for its many problems. It'll stir a bit, but it won't be shaking you.

GERAINT EVANS

> **"EVERYTHING PEAKS AT ACCEPTABLE BUT RARELY GOES BEYOND. IT LOOKS OKAY, SOUNDS OKAY, PLAYS OKAY"**

"*Lost Kingdoms* is so addictive you'll play through it in a few sittings"

HEALTH BAR
The blue gauge shows how many hit points you have remaining. Energy can be restored at health points, or by using special healing cards.

CRYSTAL BALLS
Keep collecting the pink and blue crystals from the playing field to keep your magic energy up.

CARD SHARPS
These are the cards you have in play. Simply press the appropriate button to put your creature into battle. Unwanted cards can be discarded by pressing R and the corresponding button.

NEXT PLEASE
Once one of your cards has been used up it is replaced by the card shown here. Keep an eye on this to make your tactics work more effectively.

LOST KINGDOMS

Pick a card – any card. Oh, so that'll be a +3 Beelzebub with elemental neutralising abilities. Obviously.



INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	FROM
PUBLISHER	ACTIVISION
PLAYERS	1-2
MEMORY CARD PAGES	2
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	NO
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	NO

WHEN'S IT OUT?
Lost Kingdoms is out now in the UK, or on US import (if you like).

COST: £40

GET INTO THE GAME

Cut the deck and deal yourself the best hand...



DECK BUILDING
Make sure you have a variety of cards to get you through the early levels. Trap as many creatures as you can to build up your collection.

LAZY BONES
Summon weak creatures like skeletons to do your bidding and then keep out of the way. You'll soon learn how to avoid nasty attacks.

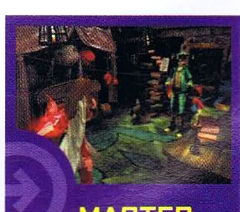
HINTS
See Alexander and Gurd for tips and trade in old cards for better ones.



Top Trumps. Uno. Peaknuckle. Canasta. Besides the silly names, all these games have something in common: they all require a deck of cards to master. From Tarot to *Pokémon*, the almost magical quality of cards has been tapped by game creators for hundreds of years.

But *Lost Kingdoms* does something incredible: it takes all the elements that make the best card games tick and deftly integrates them into the videogame format. Put simply, it's an RPG that uses card collecting as its core principle. So instead of developing your hero's stats, you develop the abilities and experience of the cards in your deck. And it all works brilliantly.

Though the plot doesn't stray too far from traditional RPG fare, it acts as the impetus to your card-collecting adventures.



MASTER CARD
Katia meets the scholarly Alexander when she's out and about on her travels. This mysterious – and unusually dressed – figure is researching the abilities of fairies and is keen to get hold of as many of them as he can. Collect enough fairies during missions and Alexander will reward you with powerful cards – a real incentive, if you needed it.

Magic: The Gathering for Gamecube? No, wait – it's good!



Random encounters are not loved by all gamers, but in *Lost Kingdoms* they at least give you the chance of gaining new cards.



Cards won can be added to the deck at health points.



Graveyards – always a good place for a spot of Top Trumps.



Some creatures have rubbish attacks. Avoid at all costs.







Look for enemy elemental symbols so you can beat it with the best card.



"LOST KINGDOMS TAKES ELEMENTS THAT MAKE THE BEST CARD GAMES TICK AND DEFTLY INCORPORATES THEM INTO A SUPERB VIDEOGAME"

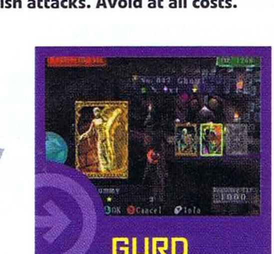
Katia is heir to the throne of Alanjeh and must set out on a quest to discover the source of a mysterious fog that threatens to engulf the Five Kingdoms. Armed with just three magical cards, Katia must search for the powerful Runestones, build up her card collection and defeat the source of the evil.

MISSION YOU ALREADY

The game is mission-based, so it's perfect for quick sessions. Thing is, *Lost Kingdoms* is so addictive you'll likely play through right to the end in just a few sittings. Early quests ease you into the action and act as mini tutorials on how to use cards effectively. Essentially, there are three types of card: those that slash enemies with a single attack; those that summon powerful demons; and independent cards that can perform many different kinds of marvellous feats. The cards are assigned randomly to the four main controller buttons – simply press Y, X, A or B to unleash the card designated to the given button.

Anyone familiar with the depth and brilliance of Magic: The Gathering will be right at home with *Lost Kingdoms*. Each card is also classified as an elemental type – either Earth, Water, Wood or Fire. As tradition decrees, water-based creatures will be more powerful against fire-based ones, and so on. As more cards are collected – either by searching chests or from benevolent characters – the combination of attacks and strategies becomes mind-boggling. There are over 100 cards to collect in the game and, as in *Pokémon*, many of them can be evolved into more powerful versions. A deck of 30 cards can be taken on each mission, and you should choose wisely before your quest. Favourite decks can be stored, copied and edited.

Shrewd deck-building is important because once a card is used, it will no longer be available for the rest of the level. Your deck



GURD ADVICE

Gurd is an old crone who helps Katia out from time to time. She also owns a strange apothecary near the border of Alanjeh, where Katia can boost her card collection. Here cards can be bought, sold and powered up. Gurd may also suggest new locations for Katia to visit. Not just a pretty face, then. Well, not much of a pretty face at all, to be honest.

HOUSE OF CARDS

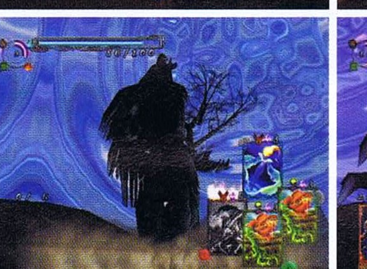
There are over 100 cards to collect but you can only have thirty in one deck…













LYCANTHROPE

The werewolf is one of the first cards you will receive in the game. He can be summoned quickly and will swipe out at any enemy unlucky enough to be standing nearby. A good card for early missions.

JACK-O-LANTERN

Jack-O-Lantern has a devastating instant attack – he will pluck off his pumpkin-head and throw it into the fray. Any enemy nearby will receive a massive amount of damage from the ensuing explosion.

STONE HEAD

A trap creature, Stone Head will hover above the battlefield until an unsuspecting enemy walks underneath him. Expect some devastating casualties when he comes crashing down…

CHIMERA

Strongest against wood-based creatures, the mighty Chimera will charge into enemies either killing them or stunning them in the process. If that fails, it can also place a nasty curse on survivors.



△ There are over a hundred enemies to fight.



△ The Necromancer was once a foe – now he's a close friend!



△ A few switch puzzles spice proceedings things up.



will deplete quickly, especially against some of the more powerful bosses in the game. Fortunately, there are several ways of keeping the deck healthy. Weakened enemy creatures can be trapped with existing cards by pressing R and throwing the card in the direction of your foe. This is a good tactic if one of your creatures is about to die anyway and you want to replace it with an enemy. Also, evoke certain creatures (such as the Mind Flayer) and a number of cards already used will be put back into your deck. Cards collected from chests can also be added to your deck at given health points.

"LOST KINGDOMS OFFERS A LEVEL OF DEPTH MISSING FROM MOST NARRATIVE-BASED ROLE-PLAYERS. AND IT'S EXCELLENT FUN TO BOOT"

The genius of *Lost Kingdoms* is that it has the addictive collecting qualities of the *Pokémon* games, but also offers a level of depth missing from most narrative-based RPGs. And it's excellent fun to boot. There are, however, minor criticisms that prevent it from teetering over the edge into the realms of true genius. Firstly, the effect generated whenever a random battle occurs is overly long and unnecessary. Secondly, Katia's movement is not the speediest or most fluid of any videogame character, and often you may find yourself trapped between game furniture and creatures with nowhere to run. Getting battered because you can't get out of the way can become frustrating.

Yet these flaws are mere blemishes on what is otherwise a sublime, engrossing and deep videogame experience. Believe us – get hooked on *Lost Kingdoms* and you'll soon be a fan of what is hopefully going to be a burgeoning sub-genre of game.

A genuinely pleasant surprise.

MARK WALBANK



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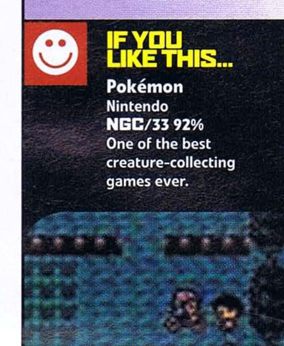
- Amazing cards.
- Lots of creatures to collect.
- Deep gameplay.

–

- Could be too taxing for some.
- Random battles.
- Control niggles.

IF YOU LIKE THIS…

Pokémon
Nintendo
NGC/33 92%
One of the best creature-collecting games ever.





8 VISUALS

Gorgeous locations and graphics, though there's some fogging.

7 SOUNDS

Limited, but the spot FX suit the environments really well.

9 MASTERY

The combinations of cards to choose are nearly endless.

8 LIFESPAN

Getting to the end may take 20 hours – and that's just finishing it…

VERDICT

A brilliantly addictive, highly original slice of card-collecting entertainment. This is Top Trumps for the 21st century.






ADVANCED FUN!
GT ADVANCE 2
GAME BOY ADVANCE
SCOOBY DOO
BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT
SPIRIT
STALLION OF THE CIMARRON
Also available from THQ...
FILA DECATHLON
MONSTERS, INC.
motogp
STAR WARS
www.gclub.net www.thq.com
THQ

"*Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* is spectacularly underwhelming"



△ Part of the 'fun' is dispatching crap robots with your Lucas-patented Light-Wand™. Zzzzzzzz.



△ Yawnsome driving bits? Count 'em in!



△ Anyone round here remember *Epic*? No?

STAR WARS: ATTACK OF THE CLONES

INFO BURST

FORMAT	GBA
FROM	RADICAL
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE CART LINK-UP	NO
SAVE	PASSWORD
OUT	NOW
COST	£40

Film-licence-used-badly shocker!



Who'd have thought that Anakin would grow up to be Darth Vader, eh? Likewise, who'd have thought that the officially-licensed game of the film would be nothing but a disappointment? Well, we would.

Being nothing more than a mix of side-scrolling 2D levels interspersed with pedestrian 3D races, *Star Wars: Episode II* smacks of something that has had more time and effort spent on its presentation than more minor things such as, you know, *gameplay*.

The main platform levels are stiflingly linear, not even allowing you to move up and down in ye olde *Double Dragon* fashion, while the assorted enemies do little more than walk towards you going through the motions of their pre-set movement patterns. Your lightsaber attacks are cumbersome, and the special moves – generated by collecting enough energy orbs from deceased foes – are spectacularly underwhelming. And don't even think of jumping, as it's a lottery as to whether the sluggish controls will allow you to leap to where the game wants you to go.

Sure, the whole thing is presented in a way that will no doubt wow impressionable youngsters and cash-happy parents with its digitised cut-scenes and familiar orchestral theme music. However, even the most hardcore of Star Wars completists would be hard-pressed to keep it for anything other than 'collection' purposes.





△ Renegade F1 drivers snub 'The Man' by hosting their own races – feel the excitement!

DOWNFORCE

INFO BURST

FORMAT	GBA
FROM	TITUS
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE-CART LINK UP	NO
SAVE	PASSWORD
OUT	NOW
COST	£30



Echoing the feelings of many a disgruntled gamer, this bunch of crazy rebel drivers have split from the official F1 championship to set up their own competition where pure speed is of the essence. Er, hurrah! Certainly, on the speed front *Downforce* comes up smelling of burnt rubber and sweet-smelling roses *(You what? – Ed)*. As you zoom around the seedy streets of Las Vegas, the treacherous twists of Geneva or any of the other ten tracks, battling with as many other on-track cars, you don't need to worry about braking much as you can simply spin full-circle out of any trackside collisions. Nice. Admittedly, there is some pop-up, but if you're staring at the background all the time you're not likely to win many championships. But as a GBA speed-fest this is top trumps and a real-life (well, you know) alternative to the superior *F-Zero*.

Thirty notes pretty well spent, we'd say.





△ Ooh, scary! Better get out your forked stick...



△ One of the manly men gets his manly bumps.

RIPPING FRIENDS

INFO BURST

FORMAT	GBA
FROM	THQ
PLAYERS	1-4
SINGLE-CART LINK UP	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30



Lauded as the world's most manly men – although our money's still on Alf Stewart from Summer Bay – the Ripping Friends are on a mission to save the world from – well, lots of bad guys, whose names allude to various fart jokes. Which means seven levels of scrolling along, picking up weapons and using them on said baddies, occasionally powering up your Manly rating to unleash a suitably macho special move on those pesky foes.

Hardly revolutionary, sure, but the cartoon-style graphics (complete with black outlines on the characters), do work, and there's a nice variation in the level locations, with the preliminary one seeing you on top of a giant moving bomb. And to offset the fact that the solo-player mode is ludicrously easy, there's both co-operative and deathmatch four-player modes to bump up the longevity factor.




△ Jud loves the sniping levels. Obviously.


△ Stupid heroics are also an option.


△ You can dish out gunishment in the guise of a para, a Huey pilot, or (if you're a psycho), a sniper.

COUNTER TERRORISM SPECIAL FORCES



INFO BURST

FORMAT	GBA
FROM	LSP
PLAYERS	1-2
SINGLE-CART LINK UP	NO
SAVE	PASSWORDS
OUT	NOW
COST	£30

Top *Metal Slug*-style action…

Unfortunately, *CT Special Forces* doesn't let you curb the threat of world terrorism by blowing up Osama Bin Laden and scattering his beard across six different continents, but this fantastic piece of armchair action does let you do just about everything else: play as three different characters; fly Apache helicopters; shoot sniper rifles – all done in a delicious *Metal Slug* stylee. You'll love a bit of it.

Utilising the triple prowess of a paratrooper, a helicopter pilot (for some top-down blasting) and a sniper, you toil through the usual army game locations (developers LSP call them 'hot spots' – although we can't imagine Marxist nutters in the South American jungle make the most welcoming of travel reps), such as deserts, jungles, cities and mountains, 'taking down' the enemy and increasing your arsenal as you go.

The whole thing is carried out with real aplomb, melding together the three different game styles without any nasty bumps or scratches – other than the ones inflicted in battles. The option to increase the firepower and effectiveness of your weapons is a superb one, though the game doesn't beat about the bush in terms of difficulty – even when you're 'tooled up' to your staring, bloodshot eyeballs, this game is going to test even the brawniest of gaming mettle and the stiffest of upper lips.

With fine sprites and background detail, a two-player speed challenge (just as long as you've got a link cable, obviously) and, thankfully, no continues, *Special Forces* succeeds, mainly on good old-fashioned gaming values alone. Which is good to see.

This really is great stuff – your very own handheld war on terror. Get in it pronto.


NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING 85


△ Look at Droopy. Look at his stupid face. Turd.


△ The controls are surprisingly sophisticated.

DROOPY'S OPEN TENNIS



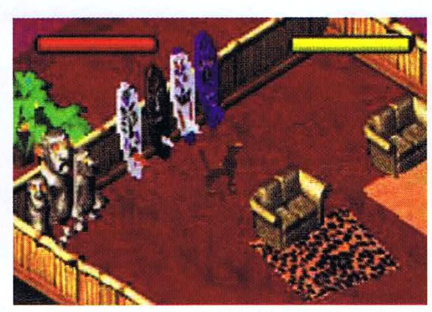
INFO BURST

FORMAT	GBA
FROM	LSP
PLAYERS	1-4
SINGLE-CART LINK UP	YES
SAVE	PASSWORD
OUT	NOW
COST	£30

After seeing everyone from Snoopy to Mario and Luigi prancing around on centre court, tranquilised, depressed hound Droopy is now looking to become top tennis dog himself, serving up this surprisingly good toon licence. And of course, being set in the land of Tex Avery, you'll be playing on courts set in the Wild West, a junkyard alley, and even a penitentiary yard.

Pleasingly, the controls offer enough scope to pull off drop-shots and smashes, while longevity is provided through the four-player and tournament modes (complete with training games). There's also a 'cartoon' option, where props like bear-traps and dynamite litter the court. More than just enough to tide you over until the release of Sega's *Virtua Tennis*.


NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING 82


△ Zoiks! Is that an evil robot Vinny in the corner?


△ Speccy monger Velma strokes her hairy chin.

SCOOBY DOO THE MOVIE



INFO BURST

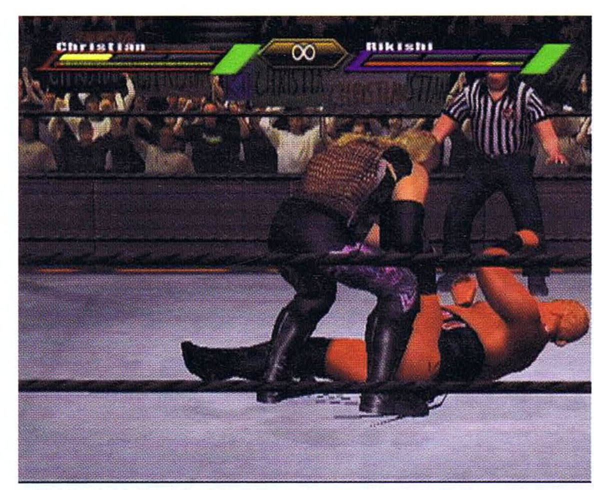
FORMAT	GBA
FROM	HEAVY IRON
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE CART LINK-UP	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30

Wander through numerous isometric 3D environments on Spooky Island looking for clues to complete small mysteries, which in turn bring you closer to the one big giant mystery behind it all. You start at the Spooky Hotel, where it's a case of talking to the residents to gain hints to progress. For instance, a concierge informs you that they've lost a key, which leads you to a woman who tells you she saw someone throw it in the pool. Get there, though, and the Scoobster won't go in the pool 'cos it's too cold, so you have to find Velma, who knows how to… oh, yawn.

It's slow, it's (mostly) boring, and it never gets more taxing than walking around and pressing the A-button. A real old stinker.


NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING 44

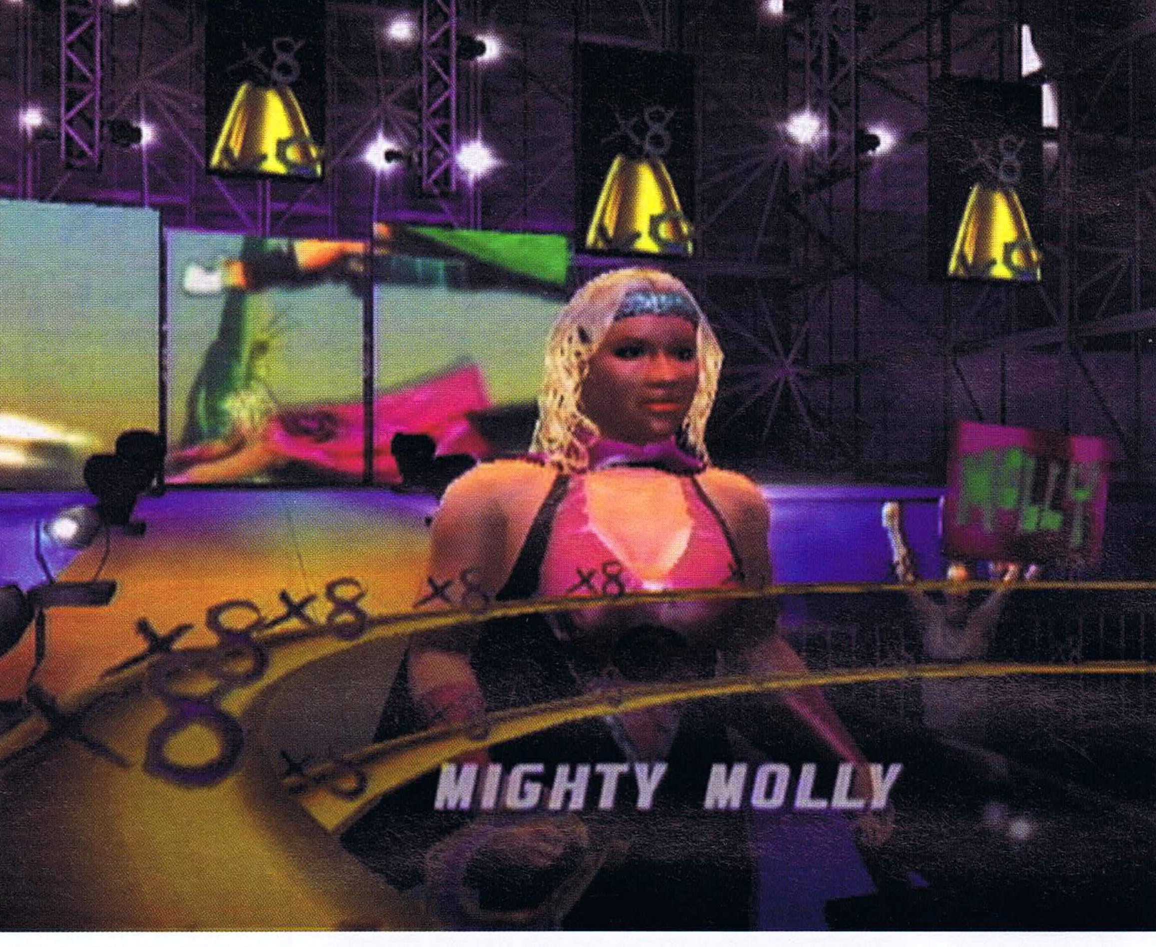
"One slick-meister of a grappling game"







△ Lita feels the full force of Trish Stratus' fist. Nice pair of girls.



△ She's mighty alright, but she's a real minger, too. Still, team Molly up with her mate Hurricane and suddenly you've got a reeeeal pairing.

WWE X8

INFO BURST

DEVELOPER:	YUKE'S
PUBLISHER:	THQ
PLAYERS:	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES:	12
RUMBLE FUNCTION:	YES
GBA LINK-UP:	NO
DISCS:	1
ONLINE PLAY:	NO

WHEN'S IT OUT?
WWE X8 is out in the US now, and is likely to hit British shores some time later in the year – probably November.



COST:
$50 (£35)

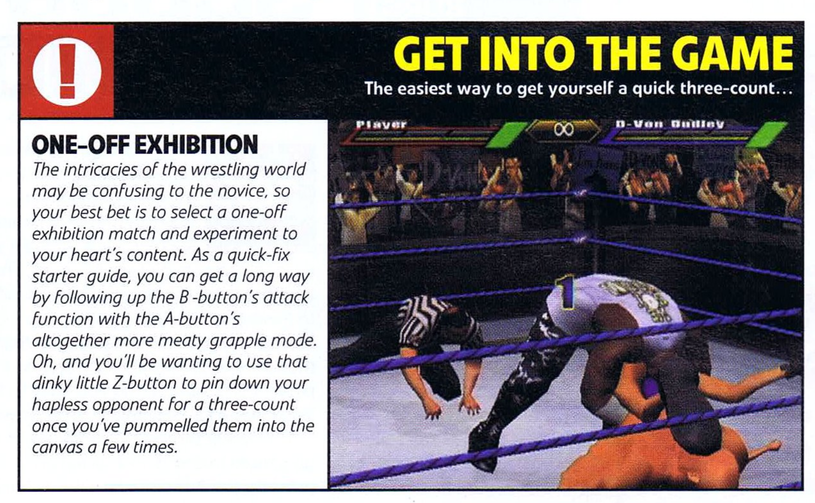
WWF is dead! Or, at least, the F is. Fortunately, everything else is very much as per for The Rock and co's first Gamecube outing…

GET INTO THE GAME

The easiest way to get yourself a quick three-count…

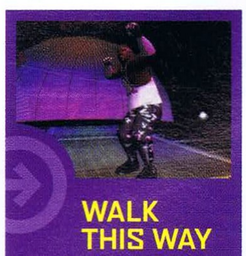
ONE-OFF EXHIBITION

The intricacies of the wrestling world may be confusing to the novice, so your best bet is to select a one-off exhibition match and experiment to your heart's content. As a quick-fix starter guide, you can get a long way by following up the B-button's attack function with the A-button's altogether more meaty grapple mode. Oh, and you'll be wanting to use that dinky little Z-button to pin down your hapless opponent for a three-count once you've pummelled them into the canvas a few times.



First off: *Wrestlemania X8* isn't the best wrestling game in the world. Far from it, in fact. Those expecting to revisit the heady heights of the N64's classy *WWF No Mercy* will be disappointed just about from the moment their first fight kicks off. However, it *is* the best wrestling game available on Nintendo's purple box of pretty little tricks so far – though, with the rubbish *Legends of Wrestling* forming the competition that's perhaps not so surprising.

Indeed, compared to Acclaim's *Legends Of Wrestling* (or *Legends of Rasslin'* as we soon dubbed it), this, Yuke's officially licensed effort, is a veritable slick-meister of a grappling game. The animation of the steroid-enhanced bods is smoother, the camera zooms in smartly as you lock horns at close quarters, there's finer detail in the



WALK THIS WAY

Dedicated WWE fans will be delighted to know that all the characters' signature ring-entrances are present and correct – if you actually get the chance to listen to them. See, once your character has done their little dance the game cuts straight to ringside, thereby skipping out on much of the walk down the aisle. Shame – that's part of the fun.

WWE WRESTLEMANIA X8

The first UK review of the game that's just hit the States

IN GOOD SPIRITS

Not just your average energy bar. Your spirit meter starts green but turns red when you're hot or cools down to blue when you're feeling weak.

ADRENALIN

Every time you attack your opponent, your adrenalin will start to pump and gradually fill up this bar. Once maxed-out, you can pull off some natty wrestler-specific finishing moves.

SUPERSTARS!

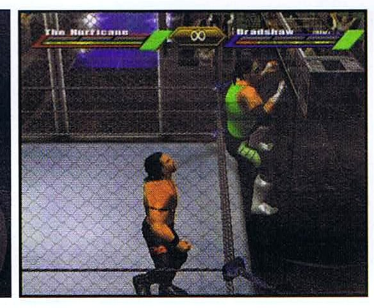
WWE X8 is no slouch when it comes to characters, offering you a total of 42 steroid-enhanced bods to play with. Oh, and there may just be a few hidden ones to unlock as well…

SENSE OF DIRECTION

Things can sure get a bit hectic when there are four players battling it out for supremacy in a Royal Rumble, but thanks to these handy circle and arrow devices you'll always know in which direction your wrestler is going to attack – vital to make sure you gang up on the right foe.

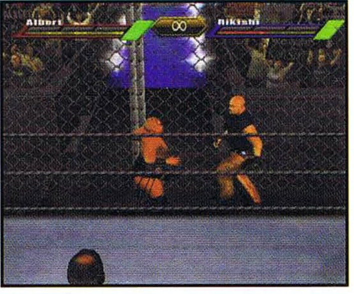
GOLDEN RINGS

Wrestling's no longer just about beating each other's faces in on a square bit of plywood. Cages, ladder matches, table bouts and, our favourite, the Iron Man Match (for real men of iron) all offer something different – and they're all present and correct in the new WWE. Booyah!









"IT SEEMS STRANGE THAT THE LACK OF PACE HASN'T BEEN BALANCED OUT WITH MORE COMPLEX COMBOS AND THROWS, LIKE WWF NO MERCY"

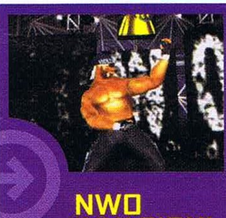
wrestler's garments, and all scrappers enter the ring in their renowned signature style. The crowd may be made up of the nasty 2D digitised fans from the N64 outings, but this time they're holding some varied and bout-specific signs, ranging from the attempted post-modern irony of 'Look At Me', to the more straightforward, 'Screw Hayman'.

PACE YOURSELF

In comparison to its limited competition, then, *WWE X8* initially comes up trumps. Unfortunately, though, strip away the favourable context and it reveals itself to be far from the real deal. For starters, the relatively pedestrian pace which the game insists on running at jars with the arcade-style controls. When your choices are limited to a scarce five face-on and five rear grapple moves, it seems curious that the lack of pace hasn't been balanced out with more complex combos and throws.

The switch between this and *No Mercy*'s more intricate alternative is alarming and pointless, and the game also falls foul of the central flaw with many games of this type – bouts simply drag on for far too long. Fifteen minutes of amateur dramatics with all the glitz and glamour of daytime television is one thing, but a quarter of an hour of watching sluggish, robotic meatheads shuffle from one end of the ring to the other is something altogether less appealing. Put simply, the basic formula of throwing a few straightforward punches and kicks (press B) followed by a throw or hold soon grows extremely tiresome.

Which, of course, begs the question: why has this all been changed since *WWF No Mercy*? Developers Yuke's have recreated the game from scratch, but the result is a grapple-fest much more in line with the *WWF Smackdown* games on PlayStation than the



NWO INVASION!

Like previous versions of the game, you can get your grapple hands on members of the rogue NWO outfit – including the man himself, 'Hollywood' Hulk Hogan. Er, even though he's no longer part of the NWO. Anyway, the roster of fighters is impressive – and, as is normal, you can unlock other characters as you complete different modes.

GOT AN AMERICAN GAMECUBE? You can nab yourself a copy of *WWE X8* – if you're 'into' this sort of thing – from our good Scottish pals at CA Games. Give 'em a call on 0141 334 3901.

"Why has everything been changed since *WWF No Mercy?*"

FIELD OF PLAY

The ring is home to all manner of things you can use to your advantage.

TURNBUCKLING

The best wrestlers will utilise the thinly coated iron posts that hold the ropes in place to gain an attacking advantage. Try smacking some howdy doody chump of an opponent headfirst into the turnbuckle for maximum damage. Or take to the skies by using them as a launchpad to come crashing down on your unsuspecting foe, as they writhe around helplessly on the canvas beneath.

OBJECTS OF DESIRE

As with TV wrestling, there are handily placed commentators' desks just to the side of the ring. More pleasingly though, you can actually run all the way back to the entrance catwalk and carry on your tussling there. Shame you can't enter the dressing rooms or go backstage, though.

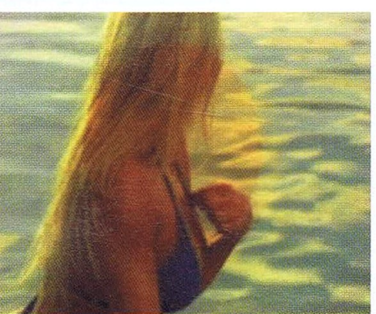


MULTIPLAYER

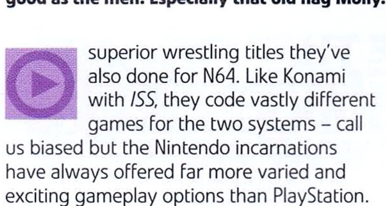
Has there ever been a game that's not more fun to play when you've got a few mates around? Well, yes, actually. But WWE X8 is still great, with the opportunity to hurl a metal ladder at the face of your compadres a huge reason to invest time in some multiplayer fun. Not that we endorse such behaviour in real life, of course.



△ Three's a crowd: the ladies can fight just as good as the men. Especially that old hag Molly.



△ Before you get a look at in-game Trish, you get to ogle at the real-life version. Neat.



superior wrestling titles they've also done for N64. Like Konami with *ISS*, they code vastly different games for the two systems – call us biased but the Nintendo incarnations have always offered far more varied and exciting gameplay options than PlayStation.

Leading on from that, it seems surprising that, although Yuke's have made the necessary changes to the banners and flags sporting the logo of the WWE (as it is now), there seem to be some more obvious, more irritating omissions. Sure, all the competitors have their full and proper names but some of the detail has been left half-finished, including signature tunes.

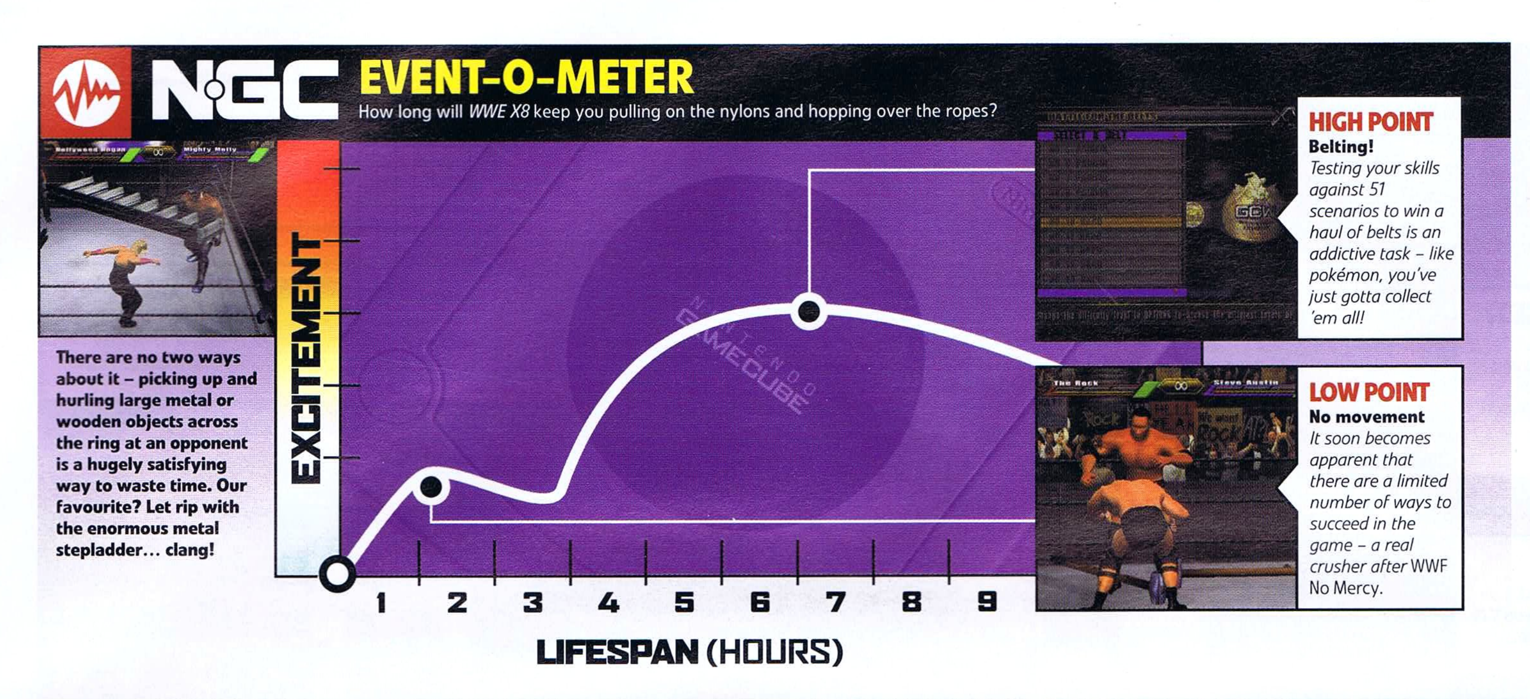
If the fighting had been better, you could have forgiven this, but the relative disappointment of the rumbles makes the lack of additional to detail all the more plain – especially as it's fine attention to detail that has always set *WWF* games apart from their competitors. And, on TV, it's the little things that matter, the small fabrications

> **"WWE X8 IS THE BEST WRESTLING-FEST AVAILABLE ON NINTENDO'S PURPLE BOX OF PRETTY TRICKS, AND BY A FAIRLY DECENT DISTANCE"**

DID YOU KNOW? Former WWE wrestler Road Dogg fought in Desert Storm, the renowned war starring Saddam Hussein and "Stormin'" Norman Schwarzkopf.

WWE WRESTLEMANIA X8

The first UK review of the game that's just hit the States





- Stacks of wrestlers to play as, plus secrets.
- Multiplayer is a hoot.
- Superb play modes.



- Lacks attention to detail all over the place.
- Limited combo system.
- Pedestrian pace.

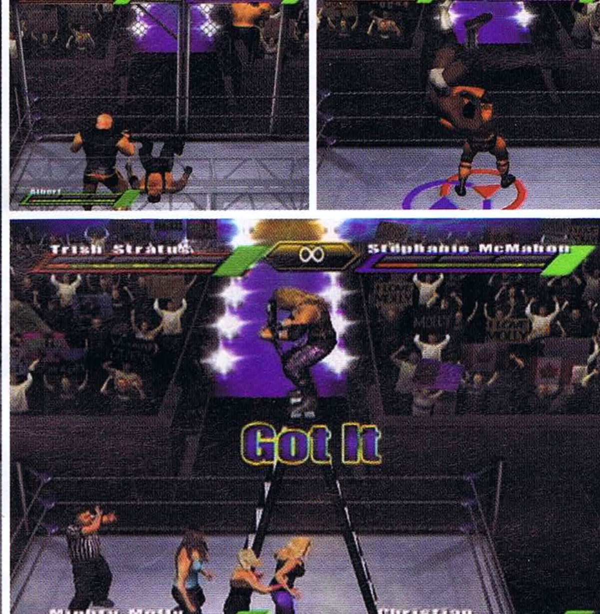


IF YOU LIKE THIS…
WWF No Mercy
THQ
NGC/49 92%
A superior N64 prequel – faster, cleverer, better.





△ The Rock attempts to deal out some pain in the game's Cage option. Lita's not having any of it.



△ Climb the ladder of success in the world of WWE wrestling.

that go to make wrestling great. Here, however, important corners have been cut.

DETAILMANIA!

And the lack of attention to detail doesn't stop there: even the most devout zealot will admit that real-life wrestling is far from authentic, but some of the clipping problems in *WWE X8* give new meaning to the term 'acting out blows'. If a taller player attempts to elbow-drop a less lofty foe (all the characters are modelled to scale), then you will often witness the elbow hitting the canvas instead due to the shorter victim. However, it still registers damage, and coupled with the times when hands and legs pop through other wrestlers or weapons are half-concealed in the floor, it makes you question the merits of *WWE X8*'s collision detection – and, indeed, its all-round accuracy in terms of visuals.

Popping our positive hats back on, we should tell you that there's a great range of options, and the inclusion of ladder and table matches (where defeating your foe is not just a case of wearing down their energy) help to add a sense of urgency and variety to the bouts. Additionally, the Battle for the Belts mode – which sees you attempting to collect belts by facing off against various rasslers (or mates who've already won them) – is a far more entertaining prospect than labouring through the usual career mode.

The game allows you to customise nearly everything about a bout, from creating your own wrestlers, to updating existing ones to keep up with the times, to selecting the appropriate style of fighting, whether it's Iron Man, Hell In A Cell – which, by the way, is *fantastic* – or a TLC match you're after. And that's TLC as in table, ladder and chair.

But all the options can't help alleviate the fact that *WWE X8* comes over as something of a rushed title, with incomplete presentation and a tendency to instruct CPU players to gang up on you as a cheap way to increase the title's longevity.

As usual, the multiplayer mode ups the ante, with the battles more enjoyable when another human foe is dealing with the same handicaps, and if you've no experience of previous *WWF* games on N64, you'll find this pretty enjoyable. But if you have (specifically, with *No Mercy*) you'll probably wonder why – and what could have been.

PHILLIP MYLNAR

FREAK POWER

WWE comes with the obligatory Create-a-Wrestler mode – this time things are even crazier with more costumes, more hairstyles and… well, just more. It would be nice to see the next entry into this series include an option to use Nintendo's imminent Game Eye – the new GB camera for Game Boy Advance. Ooooh yes.

5 VISUALS
All-round, a performance of disappointments, especially the clipping.



3 SOUNDS
No trash-talkin', no commentary, and every reason to turn it down.

6 MASTERY
It's smooth, but it's *so slow* – not really a next-gen offering.



9 LIFESPAN
Ignore the game's flaws and this will run and run and run.

VERDICT
It'll tide you over until something better comes along (like a sequel) but it's still far from the heights of the N64's finest.



NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING



70

"Hudson have wisely returned to the 2D, flat-as-a-pancake roots"

SOFT BLOCKS
Destructible walls conceal power-up items, without which you stand next to no chance of winning a single round of the game.

GOLDEN BOMBERMAN
The winner of each match gets the honour of spending the whole of the next round as Golden Bomberman, encased in a shiny suit that makes him a marked man.

REVENGE BOMBER
Defeated bombermen hop into UFOs and fly around the edge of the arena, lobbing bombs at the player who wasted them. You can turn this feature off if you prefer a 'pure' match.

PK BOMBER
Win a match and you get a quick penalty kick to see which item you'll be able to start the next round with.

INFO BURST

DEVELOPER	HUDSON
PUBLISHER	MAJESCO
PLAYERS	1-4
MEMORY CARD PAGES	3
RUMBLE FUNCTION	YES
GBA LINK-UP	NO
DISCS	1
ONLINE PLAY	NO

WHEN'S IT OUT?
Out now in the States, no confirmed UK release date.

COST: $50 (£35)

BOMBERMAN GENERATION

A high-explosive treat for four players but rather less satisfying if you're obliged to play alone. That's the Bomberman way.

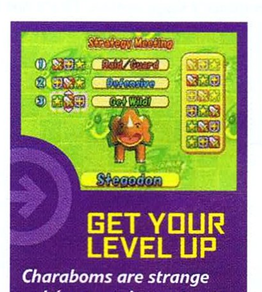
Unless you've been playing Nintendo games for ten years or more, you might not remember the days when *Bomberman* was actually any good. A couple of diabolical N64 'updates' went a long way towards ruining the reputation established by the brilliant *Super Bomberman* series on the SNES, and seemed to prove that Hudson's star character simply wasn't cut out for any sort of three-dimensional gaming.

Fortunately, it's not the end of the line for the explosive little guy. *Bomberman Generation* shows that even in a cel-shaded world there's still room for a spot of TNT-packed multiplayer fun. And this is the first *Bomberman* to come along in ages that manages to recapture the essence of the classic four-player mode, chucking around the action that made the earlier editions some of the best party games ever.

The aim is simply to detonate your mates by placing bombs at strategic locations around a single-screen maze. The bombs produce flames that light up the corridors in four directions, with the length of the flames governed by the number of fire icons you've picked up during each round. Bigger bombs can be as dangerous to you as they are to your opponents – one lick of heat is enough to vaporise any bomberman it touches.

Very, very basic stuff, and especially hilarious to play when things start to get spicy, thanks to the addition of power-ups that allow you to kick, punch and throw the bombs around the arena.

You can move bombs laid by opponents as well as your own – there's definitely a knack to judging when one is about to explode, and picking the perfect moment to thump it over the wall so it lands on the head of a rival. Too early, and you'll get it knocked right back – too late and it'll explode in your face. Not what you want.



GET YOUR LEVEL UP
Charaboms are strange pokémon-style creatures that enhance your bombing abilities. Equip one on the main screen and you'll be able to throw higher, slide longer, or use any one of 12 upgraded moves. The Charaboms themselves can also be improved by giving them the 'food', which you'll find scattered around about the levels.

2D OR NOT 2D?

It's beautifully balanced, and never unfair. The rules can be tweaked according to taste, with many different permutations and a selection of specialised arenas – although the plain-vanilla one is by far the best.

Of course if you played any of the SNES versions, you'll know that *Bomberman Generation* is almost identical to the original. Having made a terrible mess of their previous attempts to give the battle mode three dimensions, Hudson have wisely returned it to its 2D, flat-as-a-pancake roots. Which is fine by us, although it's probably

BOMBERMAN GENERATION

The never-ending blow-'em-up gets revived for Gamecube









△ Four Revenge Bombermen bounce bombs onto the heads of mutant potato moles.

ADVENTURE MODE

The hits and misses of the somewhat redundant solo game…





THE WANDER STUFF

Being a 3D game, enemies can (and do) wander wherever they please. This can make hitting them with the basic weedy explosions a tedious and frustrating task.

SUPER POWERS

Luckily there are plenty of power-up items scattered around the levels. After a little searching and bombing you'll be able to drop six bombs at once and run like the wind.

THE BIG BOMB

Holding on to a bomb makes it swell alarmingly. The longer you hold it, the more powerful it gets, ultimately transforming into The Big Bomb – a real nuke of a weapon.

CHIN-SCRATCHING

The game's puzzles fall into two categories. Some are solved by dropping bombs, while others are solved by… dropping more bombs. Okay, just the one category, then.

not what most Cube owners bought the console for, certainly in purely visual terms.

The one-player game is where the few changes to the formula have occurred, but as in almost every previous instalment in the series, it's lame when compared to the battle mode – the one and only reason

> **THE BATTLE MODE IS BEAUTIFULLY BALANCED, NEVER UNFAIR AND CAN BE TWEAKED ACCORDING TO TASTE**

Bomberman has lasted as long as it has.

This time it's a 3D puzzle-adventure in which you guide Bomberman around six themed worlds, chucking plenty of bombs to unlock doors and obliterate enemies. A boss waits at the end of each four-stage area, so you'll need to search everywhere to find the power-ups needed to take them on.

BANG SOLO

Because the 3D explosions are circular and the levels very open, you can't employ any solid tactics to clear the way ahead. Enemies can be avoided by simply walking away from them, but making them blunder into explosions is often a matter of pure luck.

Waiting to see if an enemy will stand still long enough for you to blast him just doesn't make for entertaining gameplay. You can also collect animals called Charaboms to enhance certain abilities, but apart from the poor battle games where you win them they're just part of the standard power-up system. So too the attribute bombs, which give your bombs new powers. For example, Aqua bombs can put out fires, or Ice bombs can be used to freeze impassable rivers.

Finally, there are four minigames that bring to mind *Mario Party* or, worryingly, the obscure *Bomberman B-Daman* (which scored an impressive 23 back in **NGC**/20).

The one-player looks and plays like it's aimed solely at the very young, and the only thing likely to stop you zipping through it on your first go is the sheer tedium of it all. Invite some mates round for a few games, though, and *Bomberman Generation* becomes an altogether different prospect.

MARTIN KITTS



SPECIAL

When you need a break from the standard Battle mode, the options include contests to collect coins; mark tiles with your bomberman's colour; dodge bombs that rain from the sky; and bounce bombs off the heads of moles. Scores can be carried between each game type, so you can keep track of the tally in a session of bombing, Smash Bros-style.



- Excellent range of multiplayer modes.
- You can play against the computer.



- One-player mode is big but very simple.
- Weak minigames and other extras.



IF YOU LIKE THIS…

Super Monkey Ball
Sega
NGC/67 88%
Four-player minigames with rollable monkeys. Absolutely brilliant.



5 VISUALS

Clean, bold, and rather short of detail, special effects or animation.



4 SOUNDS

Features a soundtrack so bland, you'll forget it even exists.



5 MASTERY

A technically sound update of a classically retro concept.



7 LIFESPAN

It's something you'll always want to dig out for a quick battle game.

VERDICT

While the one-player mode is below average, *Bomberman Generation* is a genuinely addictive multiplayer game.



NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING



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GEAR

The latest third-party gimcracks and gewgaws tested and tested... until they *die of pain*!

MOBILE MONITOR 5.4

FROM INTERACT **£115**

If you've got pockets with no bottoms, and quite fancy the idea of playing Gamecube games on the go, the snappily named Mobile Monitor 5.4 could be just the thing. Hooking it up takes a matter of seconds, but once the initial 'wow' factor of quasi-portable Gamecube gaming has passed (remember, you still have to have your Cube plugged in), you'll be a tad disappointed to find that, for some reason, the colours appear to be washed out, while the sound is loud and proud but tends to distort rather annoyingly at the higher end of the volume scale. On the plus side, it doesn't require an external power adaptor, and will quite happily run off the juice from your purple wonder-box, but for 100 quid you could get a small TV that's ultimately about as portable and offers superior, wider, easier-to-view picture quality.



NGC VERDICT 60



INTEGRAL 3 LCD MONITOR

FROM THRUSTMASTER **£115**

Oh dear. While the other two monitors reviewed this month are pretty ropey in the washed-out colour stakes, this one really takes the biscuit. No matter how much we fiddled with it we could barely get an acceptable picture. Basically, the screen is just rubbish. *Rogue Leader* is impossible to play on it. *Wave Race* is an even bigger nightmare – in fact, *anything* is a chore. If you really want a mobile monitor, take our advice and wait for a decent screen that takes advantage of Gamecube's digital output before splashing out.

NGC VERDICT 30



FLIGHT STICK

FROM 4GAMERS **£29.99**

This is actually pretty smart, but the only problem is there's only one game you can really use it for at the moment, and that's *Rogue Leader*. Unfortunately though, the stick actually makes Factor 5's shooter that much harder to play. Still, that's not really the stick's fault, and when it comes down to it the build quality is actually very good. All the buttons feel right, both in their quality and positioning, while the stick's housing is robust with plenty of resistance to stop it from feeling too cheap. Definitely worth a look – but definitely only when some more suitable games emerge.

NGC VERDICT 78



GTZ 500 RACING WHEEL

FROM SAITEK **£30**

It used to be just the rich kid at school no-one liked who could afford stuff like steering wheel controllers. Now, not a week goes by without the postman dropping off another ten, and this, the GTZ 500, is suitably beefy, and even comes with a manly clamping device. But how does it fare with, say, *Crazy Taxi* or *Burnout*? Quite well, actually. Sure, the buttons and paddles are more afterthoughts than anything else, but in turning corners and putting your 'pedal' to the 'metal', it comes up just fine. And with a steering wheel, that's what counts.

NGC VERDICT 79





GAMESTER PRO RACER

FROM RADICA **£19.99**

This Gamester joypad is a novel idea, woefully implemented. The idea is to cross-breed the charms of a joypad with the simulation advantages of a steering wheel, but the outcome is a hybrid that fails on all counts. You never feel in complete control, and it has a habit of disorienting you as you struggle to remember which way you're meant to shuffle the pad, not to mention that it has a uselessly narrow turning circle. Apart from *Burnout*, *Extreme G 3* and, er, *Driven*, what will this possibly come in useful for?

NGC VERDICT 28



CUBE SOUNDSYSTEM

FROM 4GAMERS **£39.99**

We like the idea of pumping out the original *Mario Bros* theme tune at 150 decibels while playing *Super Smash Bros* as much as the next man, but we can't help but wonder at the wisdom of all these sound systems. Surely you'd still be better off just running your TV through your existing hi-fi? But, whatever, here's another one, and truth be told it's not bad at all. The addition of a separate bass control is thoughtful (although in practice you only really use it to prevent those lower frequencies from distorting should you pump it up too loud). Oh, and if you're as simple-minded as us then you can have literally minutes of fun by pushing the fancy LED button on. And off. And on. And off.

NGC VERDICT 74



GAMMA GAMEPAD

FROM SAITEK **£15**

Looking suspiciously like a bigger version of Sony's original PlayStation pad, first impressions of the Gamma controlling device are not good. And using it isn't much better. The main analogue stick acts more like a digital pad, which is great for dashing in *Smash Bros*, but about as subtle as Stan Boardman at a race relations conference with other games. The C-stick is worse, being so loose it slips straight to extremes if you so much as brush against it. The shoulder buttons fail to distinguish between being used gradually and a full-on press, and the A-button feels sticky and nasty. The D-pad's okay, but it hardly makes up for the woeful inadequacies found elsewhere.

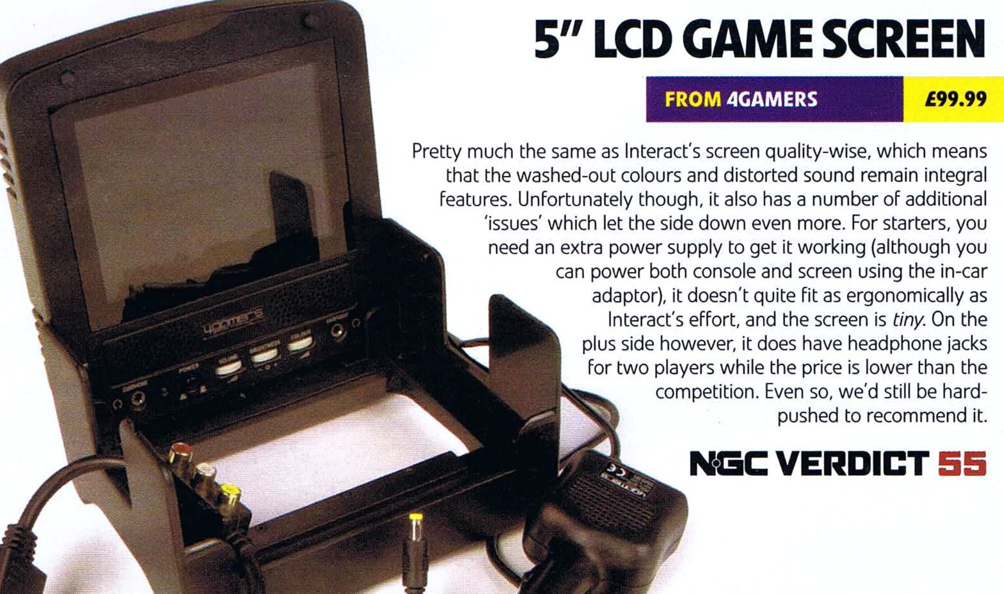
NGC VERDICT 40

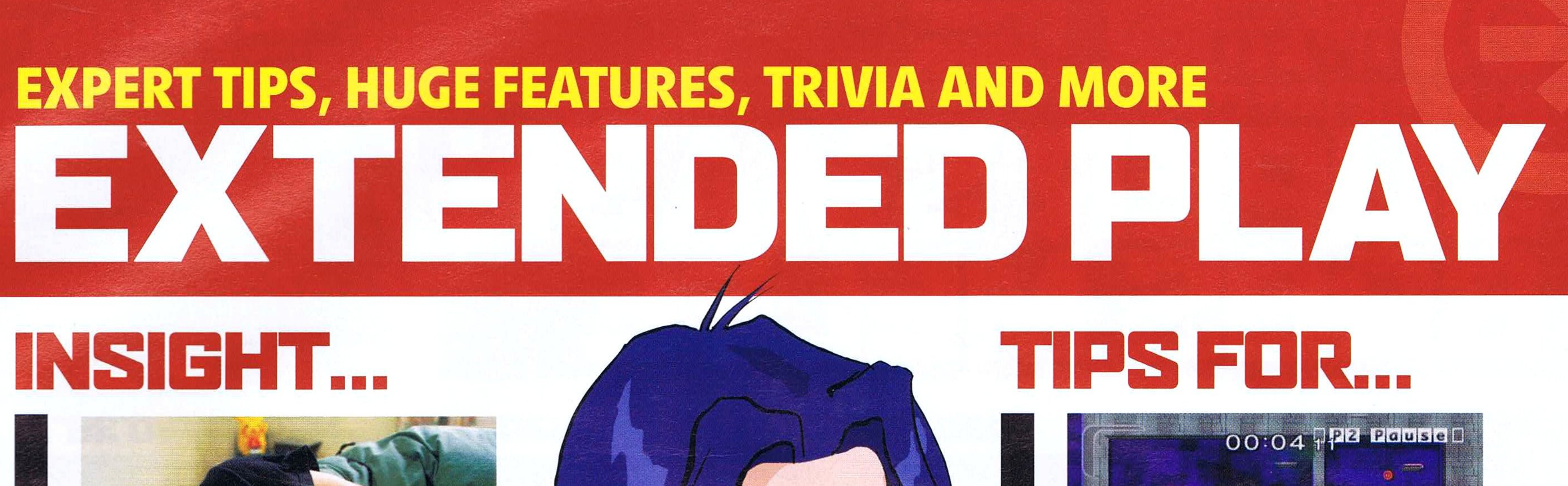
5" LCD GAME SCREEN

FROM 4GAMERS **£99.99**

Pretty much the same as Interact's screen quality-wise, which means that the washed-out colours and distorted sound remain integral features. Unfortunately though, it also has a number of additional 'issues' which let the side down even more. For starters, you need an extra power supply to get it working (although you can power both console and screen using the in-car adaptor), it doesn't quite fit as ergonomically as Interact's effort, and the screen is *tiny*. On the plus side however, it does have headphone jacks for two players while the price is lower than the competition. Even so, we'd still be hard-pushed to recommend it.

NGC VERDICT 55





EXPERT TIPS, HUGE FEATURES, TRIVIA AND MORE

EXTENDED PLAY

INSIGHT…

WHEN LIFE'S A GAME

Terrifying insight into the degeneration of the human mind as life 'becomes' a 'game'. P100

TIPS FOR…

SUPER SMASH BROS

Essential tips for hitting those targets, plus the start of our unmissable trophy-winning *Smash Bros* compo! P76

GAMING PLANET

This month: *Tottoko Hamutaro*. What's it about, Kittsy? "Hamsters". Great. Cheers. P108

I'M THE BEST

The first leagues are up and running – want to know where you're placed? Get along! P86

WIN!!

A TRIP TO NEW YORK

You heard! Lose all self-dignity in our *Spider-Man* compo and you could be off to NYC! P104

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- Gaming Planet 108
- EndGC 110





BREAK THE TARGETS IN

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Nintendo's most famous characters battle it out in an impossibly fast cartoon beat-'em-up that has just as much depth as any of its more 'serious' competitors. Features stacks of customisable options and an incredible amount of unlockable extras – the NGC office copy has racked up well over 100 hours of playing time, but there are still a few bits and pieces left to finish. The biggest and best thing on Gamecube right now.

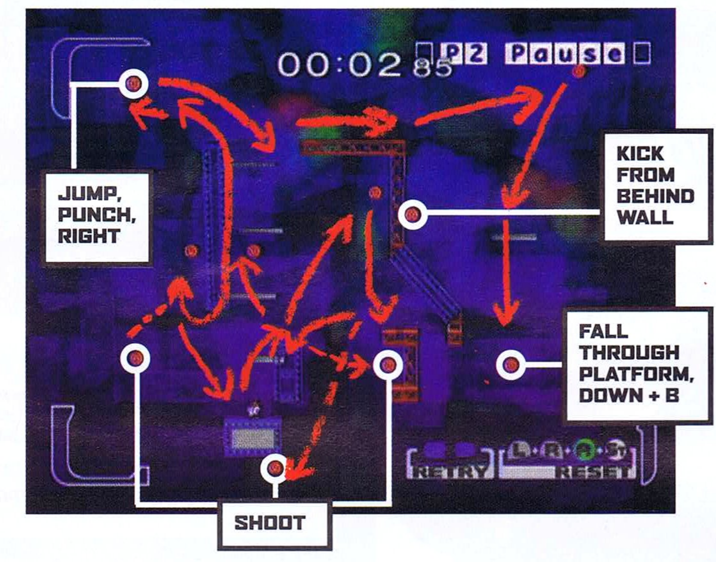


WHAT WE SAID IN ISSUE 68

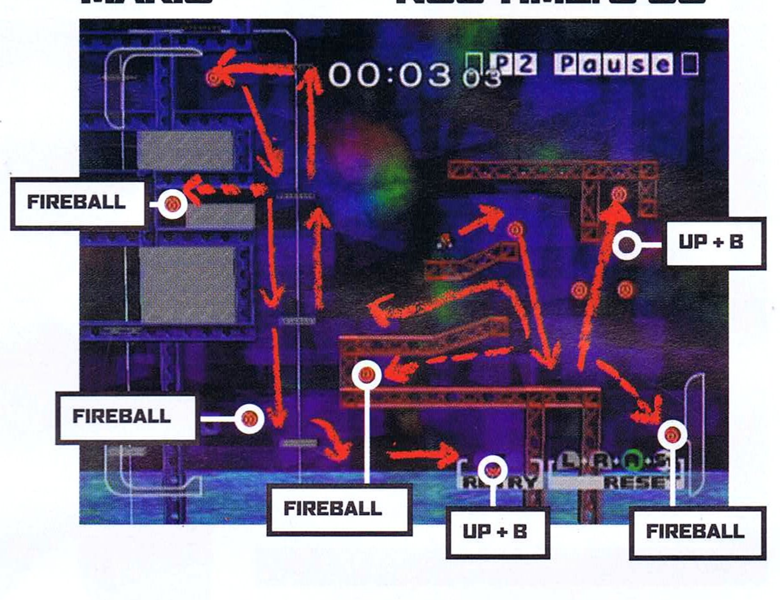
"Super Smash Bros is a vibrant celebration of everything that makes Nintendo so much more interesting than any other software company… It's a different class. The Nintendo difference, if you like."



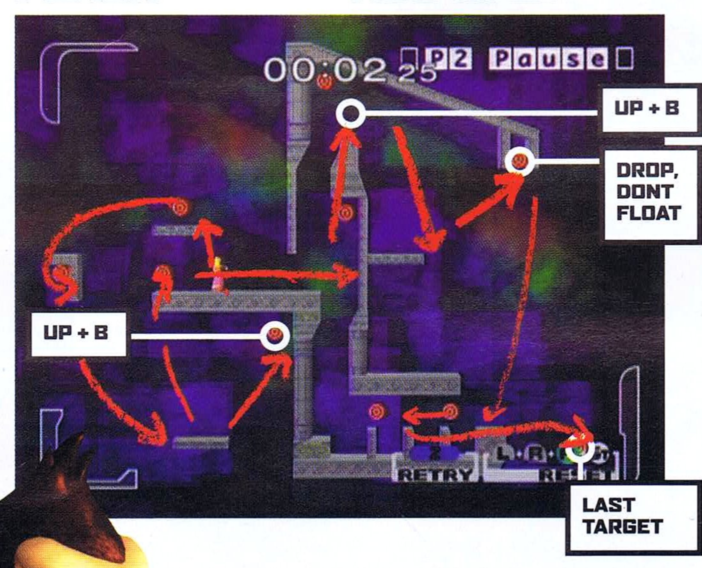
DR MARIO NGC TIME: 0'41



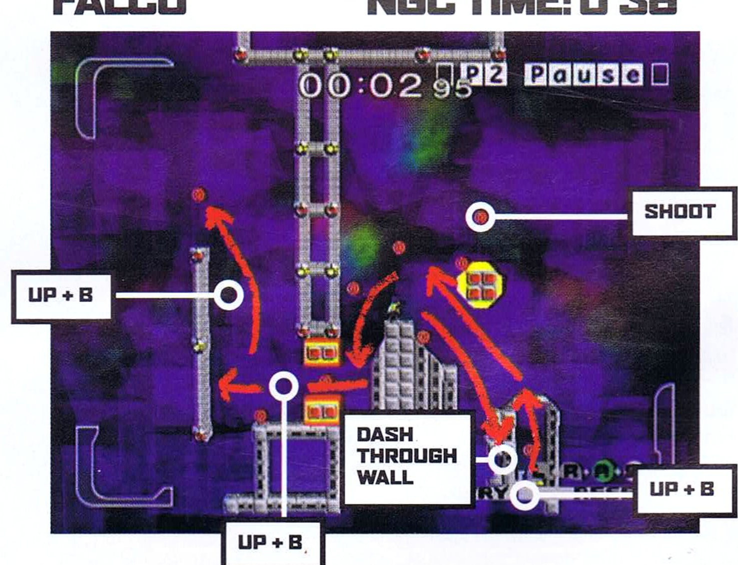
MARIO NGC TIME: 0'39"



PEACH NGC TIME: 0'47



FALCO NGC TIME: 0'36"



NGC STAR GAME

SMASH SPORTS

The indestructible Mr Saturn means you can come up with lots of strange and different sports using him as a ball. Here are a couple for starters – try playing around with different stages, items and rules, such as slow motion and sudden death, to create new variations.

BASEBALL

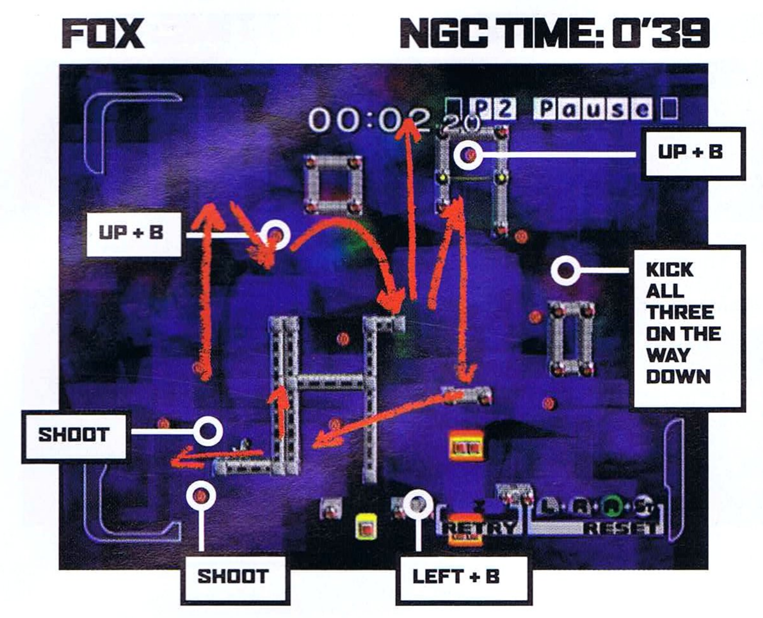
ITEMS Home run bat and Mr Saturn
STAGE Any
RULES Two to four players. One grabs a bat while another throws Mr Saturn. The player with the bat must whack Mr Saturn as far as possible – the others compete to get him 'out' by pressing A to catch him. If Mr Saturn isn't caught, it's a point for the batter. Swap roles after an agreed number of turns.

VOLLEYBALL

ITEMS Mr Saturn only
STAGE Any fairly large one
RULES This works best with two teams of two players. The aim is to knock a Mr Saturn between the two teams, keeping it in the air at all times. You get three hits per team, and if Mr Saturn touches the ground then it's a point for the other players. Play in slow-motion mode to make things a little easier.

Have the single-player stages for breakfast

FOX — NGC TIME: 0'39



NESS — NGC TIME: 1'31"

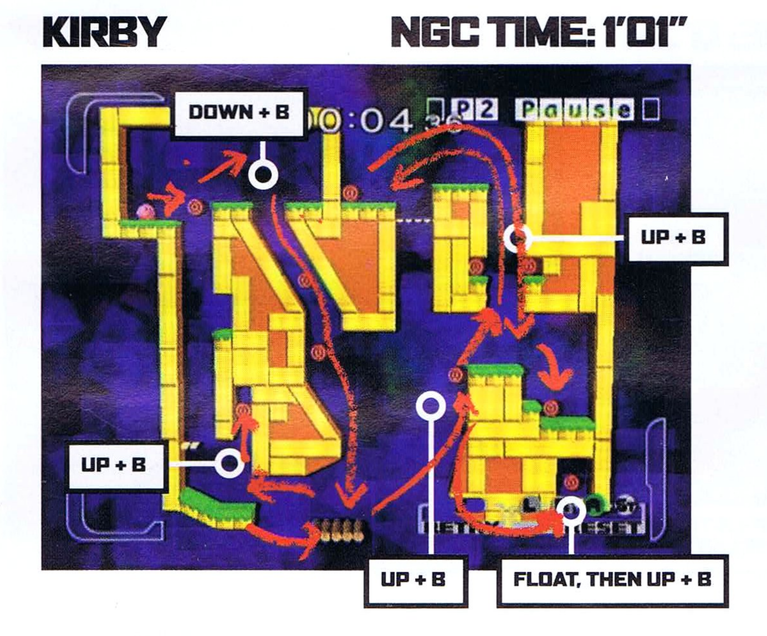


THE INCENTIVE

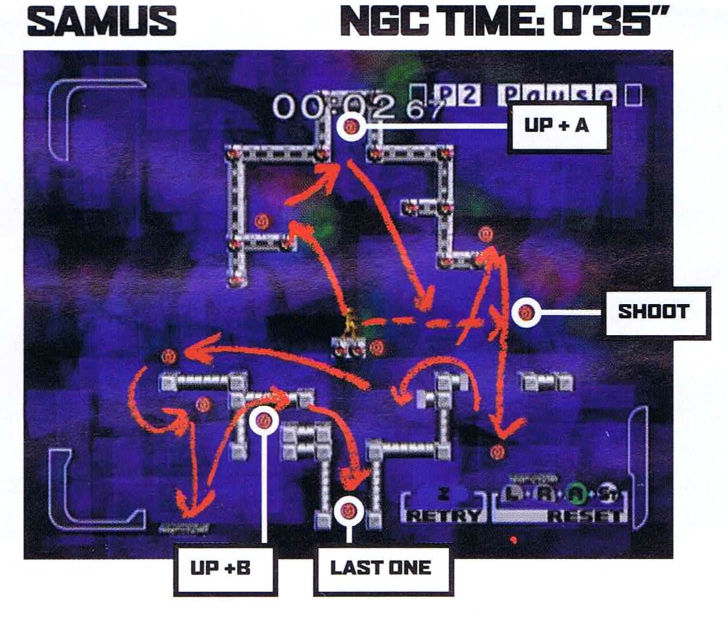
Target Test records from the one-player Classic mode all count towards the unlockable goodies you'll get by finishing them all…

- Complete the Target Test with the first 24 characters and Mr Game & Watch will challenge you. Beat him and he's yours to keep (if you fail, he'll keep popping up after every subsequent Target Test).
- Complete all 25 Target Tests to unlock Kirby's stage from the N64 version of *Smash Bros.*
- Complete all 25 with a total time of under 25 minutes and you'll get the Lon Lon Milk trophy.
- Complete all 25 with a total time of under 12'30" and you'll get the Sheriff's Badge trophy.

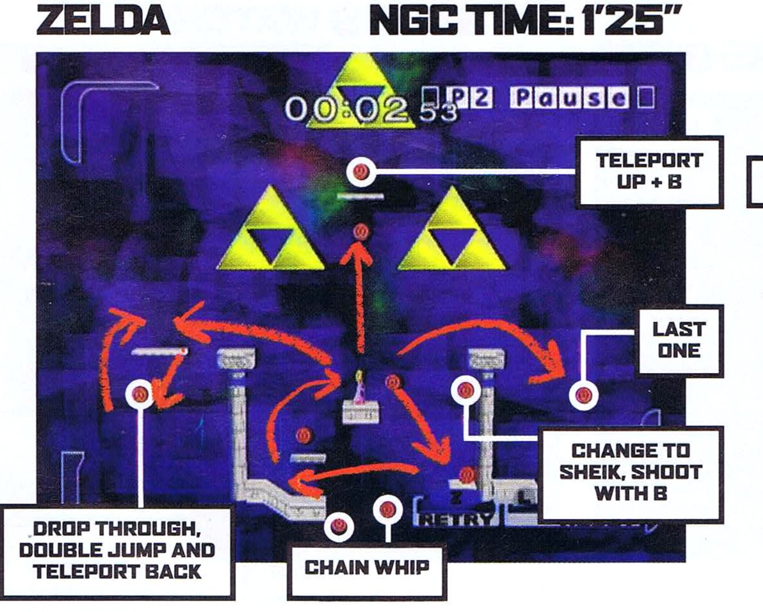
KIRBY — NGC TIME: 1'01"



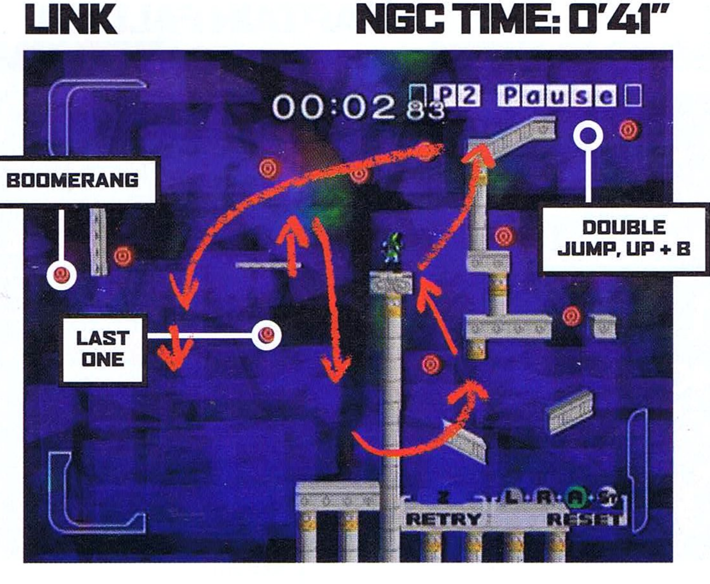
SAMUS — NGC TIME: 0'35"



ZELDA — NGC TIME: 1'25"



LINK — NGC TIME: 0'41"



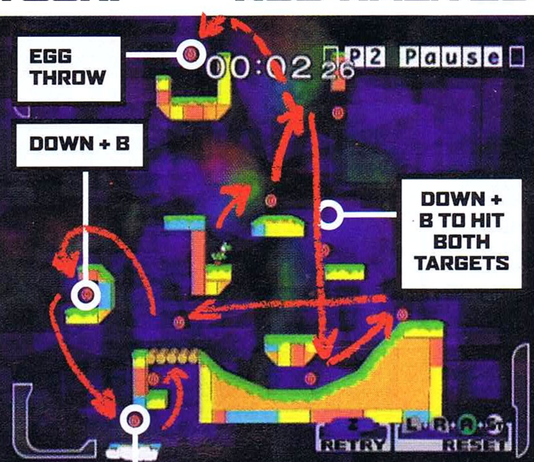
SEND US YOUR TIMES!

We've included our own rather pitiful times as a starting point, but we know you can obliterate every one of them. In fact it's possible to get below 20 seconds with every single character. If you have a decent selection of times you'd like to show off to other readers, turn to I'm The Best on page 86 to find out how to do it. We'll be running a Target Test league there in a couple of months, so get smashing and send us your records.

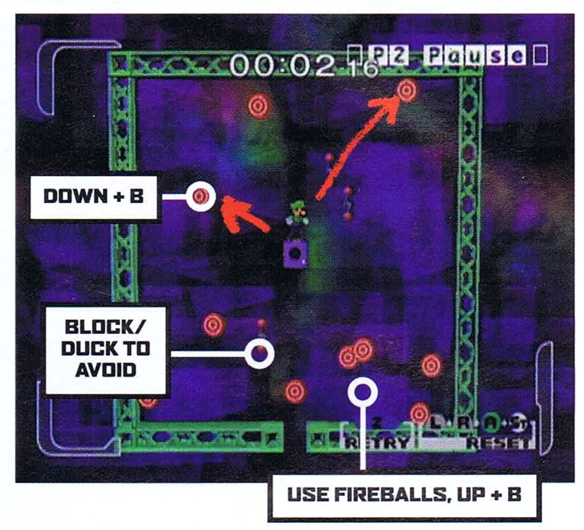
GANONDORF TIME: 0'44"

CROSS TO TAKE REMAINING TARGETS
STAND AND PUNCH
STAND AND PUNCH

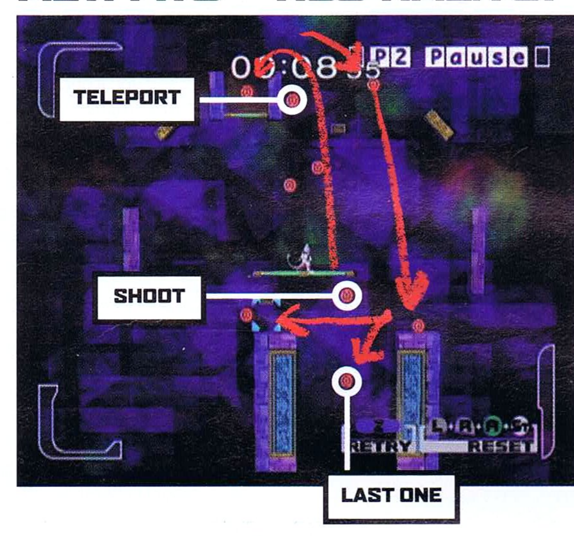
YOSHI NGC TIME: 1'23"



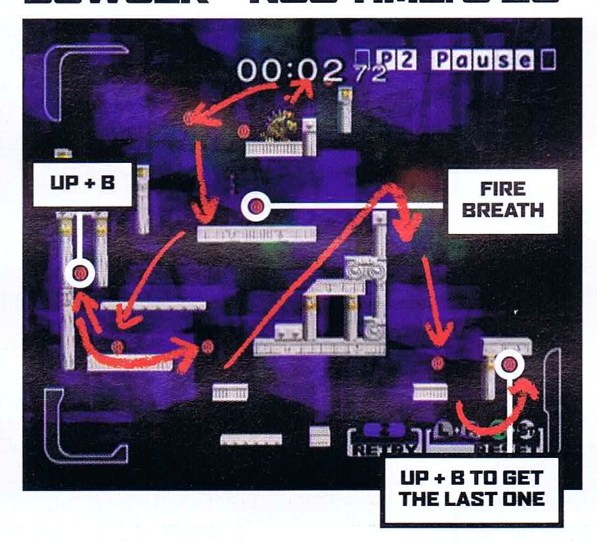
LUIGI NGC TIME: 0'37"



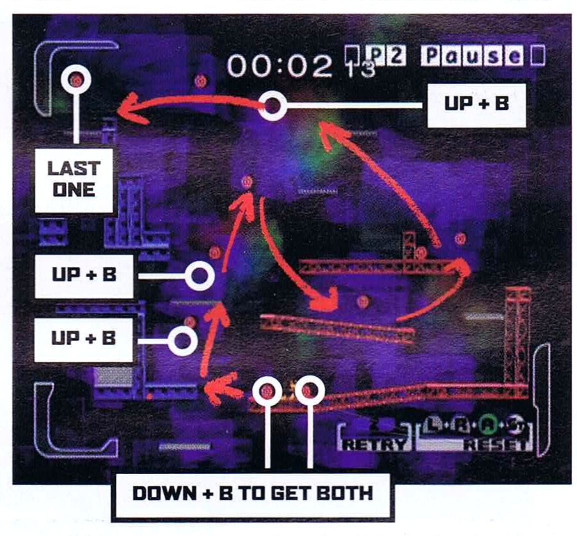
MEWTWO NGC TIME: 1'01"



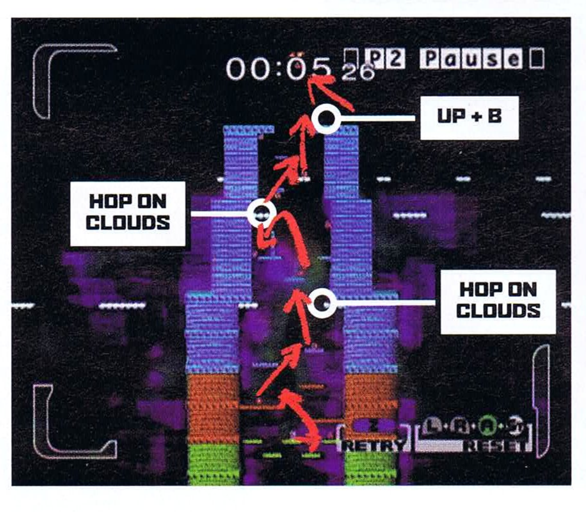
BOWSER NGC TIME: 0'29"



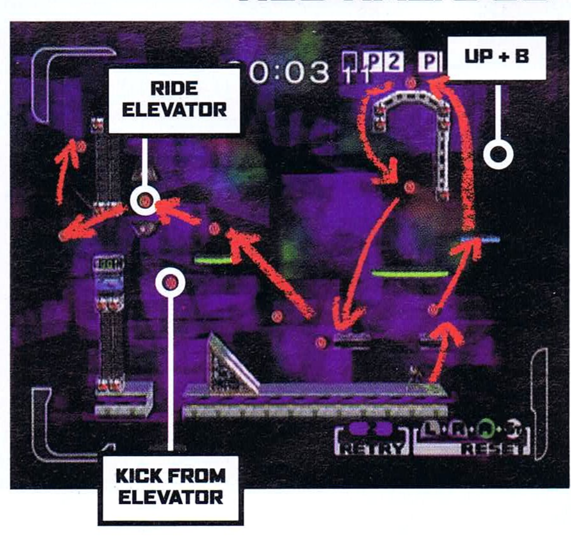
DK NGC TIME: 0'49"



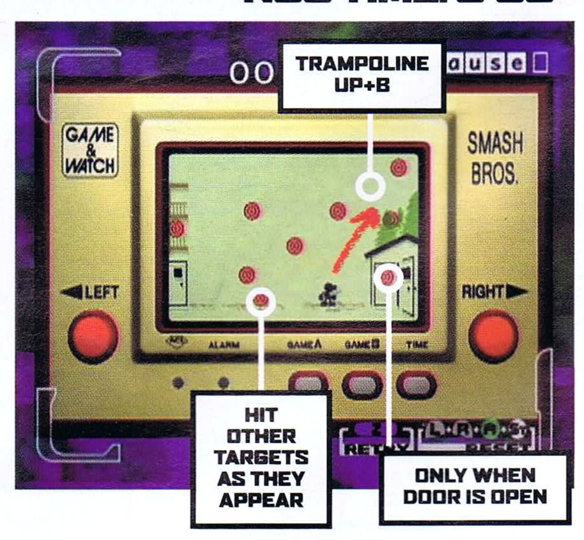
ICE CLIMBERS NGC TIME: 0'56"



CAPTAIN FALCON NGC TIME: 0'55"



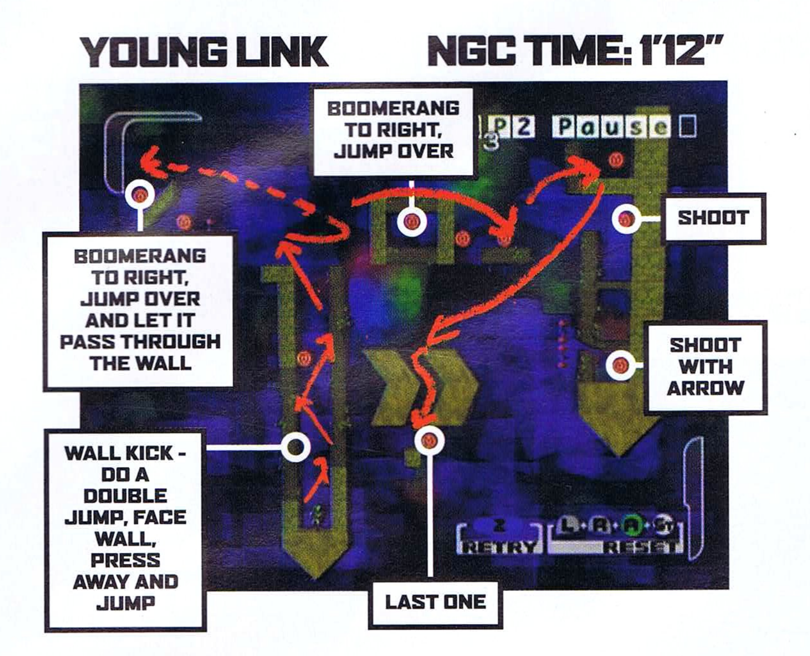
MR GAME & WATCH NGC TIME: 0'36"



SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

Have all the single-player stages for breakfast

YOUNG LINK — NGC TIME: 1'12"



PICHU — NGC TIME: 0'52"

ZAP

ZAP

STAND ON PENDULUM, SHOOT AT LEFT SIDE OF WALL

ZAP WHILE ON PENDULUM

PIKACHU — NGC TIME: 1'14"

AIR TURN

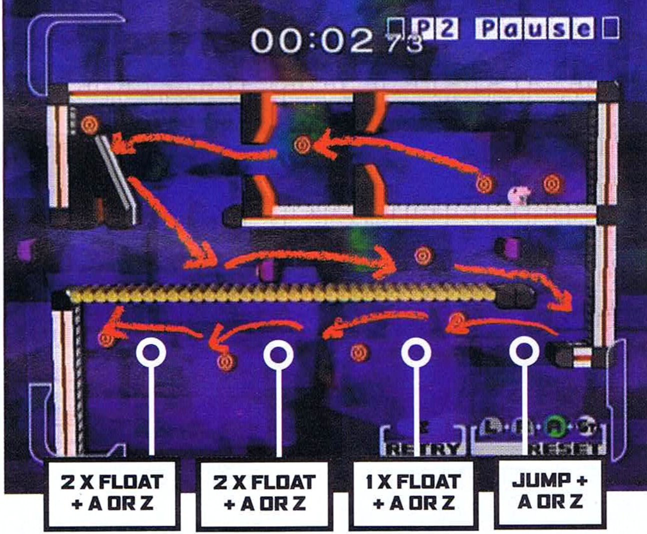
UP + A

DOWN + B

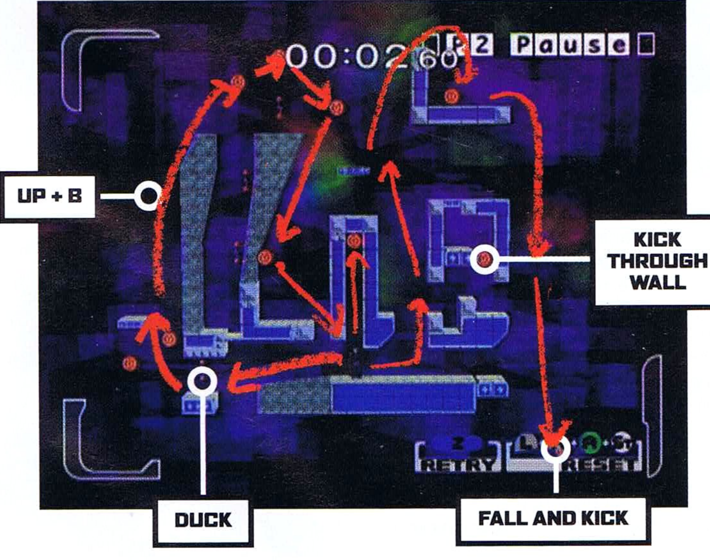
SHOOT

SHOOT THE LAST ONE ON THE WAY DOWN

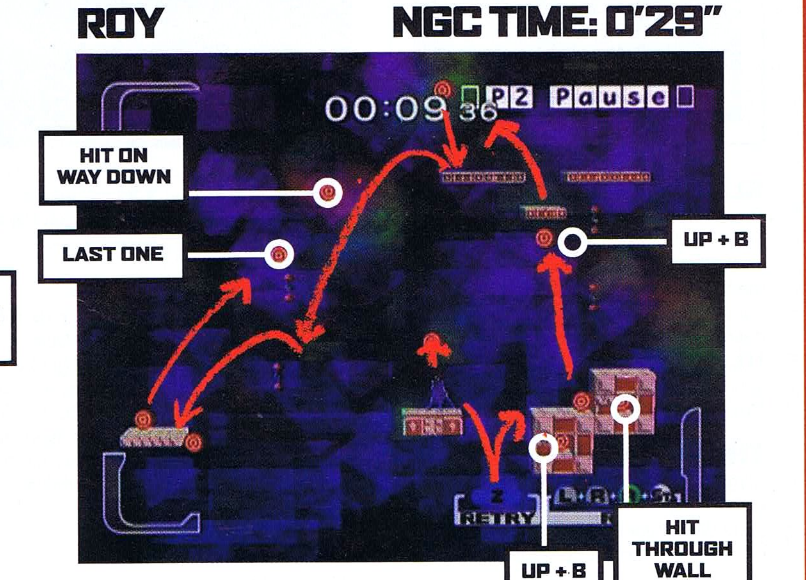
JIGGLYPUFF — NGC TIME: 0'25"



MARTH — NGC TIME: 1'06"



ROY — NGC TIME: 0'29"



NGC ON THE DVD

THE NGC LUNCHTIME SMASH BROS STAKES

There's some footage of a typically intense **NGC** *Smash Bros* battle on the DVD, but we've mislaid a crucial part of the match – the results.

If you can tell us what happened then there could be a game in it for you. Use your *Smash Bros* knowledge (and last month's Gamecube Companion book) to figure out:

1. Who won the match?
2. Who got the First Strike award?
3. Who got the Carrier KO award?
4. Who got the Button Masher award?
5. Who got the Item Catcher award?

Email ngc@futurenet.co.uk with your answers, using "Super! Smashing! Great!" as the subject line. First correct entry wins a new GC game!

WIN!

YOUR OWN CUSTOM SMASH BROS TROPHY

Collected enough trophies in the game? Then maybe you'd like your own hand-made *Smash Bros* trophy…

Yup – we're giving away a one-off piece of *Smash Bros* art, and we want *you* to design it. But not with a pencil and paper – oh no. We want you to set up a scene in the Camera Mode and take a snapshot. The best will be made into a trophy!

So, save your fave snapshots, tape or photograph them and send them to: Smash Bros Trophy Contest, **NGC**, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW.

We've included a gallery of our own efforts on the DVD to provide you with some 'inspiration'. Happy snapping!



in association with Virgin megastores

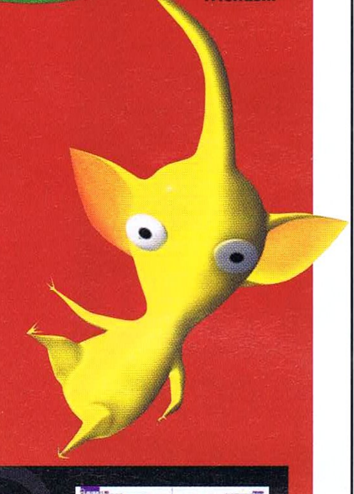
MAXIMISE YOUR FLOWER-POWER IN

PIKMIN



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Falling somewhere between *Command & Conquer* and Gardener's World, *Pikmin* was one project that Shigsy was personally involved with, and it shows. Captain Olimar has crash-landed on an alien planet populated by strange plant-men called Pikmin – to find the parts of his destroyed ship and get home, you need to enlist the help of Olimar's new vegetable friends...





WHAT WE SAID IN ISSUE 69

"Resource management isn't a term normally associated with Nintendo games, but you can forget tired, stodgy stockpiling – Pikmin is so captivating you won't realise you're playing an RTS, albeit a very warped one."



FLOWERS OR LEAVES?

Flower Pikmin are tougher and faster than their leafy cousins, but they take a long time to grow, so if you're going for a fast time you should ignore them completely. Harvest the Pikmin as soon as they sprout, growing them into flowers whenever you spot a patch of nectar-giving grass. If you're playing at a more leisurely pace you'll find the game easier if you leave the Pikmin to grow before harvesting.







1



2



3



4



SLEEPING OLIMAR

There's no real point to it, but if you press down on the D-pad any time after the first level, Olimar will lie down and wriggle on the floor. He's actually invincible in this state, but unable to control the Pikmin. Any Pikmin nearby will rush over and try to pick him up **(1)**, and if there are four or more they'll gently carry him back to an Onion and beam him up for a quick fireworks display. **(2)**

THROW FASTER

Olimar can only throw Pikmin that are within range of his stubby arms, so there's a slight delay between throws as the Pikmin shuffle around to get close to him. You can speed things up loads by using the C-stick to move the herd around, **(3)** ensuring a constant supply of Pikmin. It's a useful tactic when you're fighting against bosses.

KNOW YOUR ONIONS

In case you hadn't noticed, taking coloured pellets back to the corresponding Onion generates more seeds than you'd get by taking them to the 'wrong' Onions. You can let any colour Pikmin carry them back to the base **(4)**, then dismiss them and assign the correct colour for the last few steps into the Onion. Makes building an army a much faster chore.

LIFEGUARDS

Having Pikmin accidentally stumble into the water is incredibly annoying and costly. You've got a few seconds to save them before they die, so dismiss your remaining Pikmin and drag out the non-swimmers one by one, using the A button. If you've got any blue Pikmin with you then take them into the water – they're adept at saving drowners, and will help get yellows and reds back on dry land. Run them using the C-stick or simply take them into the water, and leave them to get on

NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE!

THREE ENDINGS

To see all three endings, finish the game with less than 25 ship parts (keep selecting Go To Sunset), 25-29 parts, and all 30 parts.

BONUS ENEMIES

As well as the more common enemies and bosses there are three 'bonus' enemies to find, each awarding a large number of Pikmin seeds upon its defeat.













MAMUTA
To find Mamuta, head back to the Impact Site on even-numbered days from day eight onwards. It's located on the tree stump next to the cardboard box.



GOOLIX
The watery Goolix can be found at the Impact Site on odd-numbered days from day nine onwards, and in the same location as Mamuta.



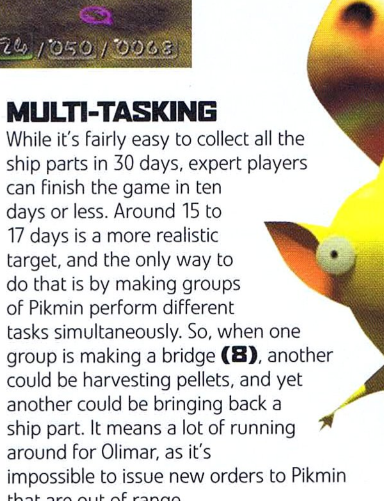
SMOKY PROGG
You'll have to be pretty good to see the vile Smoky Progg. If you can make it to the Distant Spring before day 15, it's inside the egg in the lake.

with rescuing the non-swimmers. **(5)**

DISTRACT ENEMIES

Unless you've already cleared the route back to the base camp (which is definitely the sensible thing to do), any Pikmin transporting ship parts or carcasses **(6a)** will be eaten on their way back home. You can protect them by following them back and attacking the predators directly, using the A-button **(6b)**. As long as you keep moving and hitting, the predators will run themselves ragged trying to get Olimar, and will ignore the Pikmin. Put Olimar to sleep if he's running out of energy.





FASTER FERRYING

The more Pikmin you assign to ferrying back carcasses, pellets and ship parts, the faster the job will be completed **(7)**. But if you're going to be doing some multi-tasking then you won't want to waste extra Pikmin on a single effort. If that's the case then separate the Pikmin and use the strongest ones (flower-heads) to carry heavy items. They'll drag things back considerably faster than lesser Pikmin can.

MULTI-TASKING

While it's fairly easy to collect all the ship parts in 30 days, expert players can finish the game in ten days or less. Around 15 to 17 days is a more realistic target, and the only way to do that is by making groups of Pikmin perform different tasks simultaneously. So, when one group is making a bridge **(8)**, another could be harvesting pellets, and yet another could be bringing back a ship part. It means a lot of running around for Olimar, as it's impossible to issue new orders to Pikmin that are out of range.





in association with



THE TIPS YOU NEED FOR THE GAMES YOU'RE PLAYING...

TIPS EXTRA

> **NGC READER KNOWLEDGE!**
> *Luigi's Mansion: Stop yourself running out of health by tapping the chest of drawers in the Nursery for a huge heart. You can do this as many times as you like!*
> *James Weinberg, Rickmansworth*

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES

Take those heady first steps along the road to acquiring numerous personality disorders by unlocking the following hidden characters in GC's smash 'em up:

- **Jigglypuff** Complete the one-player mode (either classic or adventure) with any character, on any difficulty level.
- **Dr Mario** Play as Mario and beat the one-player mode without continuing.
- **Luigi** Complete the Mushroom Kingdom stage, ensuring that the timer ends between 3:32:99 and 3:32:00. Get it right, and you'll face off against the green-suited plumber. Beat him and he's yours to select.
- **Young Link** Complete the one-player mode with ten of the original characters (including Link and Zelda) to unlock this feisty tyke.
- **Marth** Get a full house by beating the one-player mode with all 14 original characters to unlock this one.
- **Roy** Beat the one-player mode with Marth for the commonly-named Roy.
- **Ganondorf** To play as this super-villain, complete event match 29.
- **Mewtwo** Stay glued to the screen for 20 hours in Vs mode to unlock this character.
- **Pichu** Beat event match 37 or complete the one-player mode with Mewtwo.
- **Falco** Beat 100-man melee.
- **Mr Game & Watch** After completing the one-player mode with every single character (including the hidden ones above) this retro-fiend will be yours. He's a real winner, he is.



PIKMIN

SUPER STRENGTH

Everyone knows there are three stages planted Pikmin grow through, but it's possible to build the little chaps up to full flower-power without having to leave them in the ground and wait for ages. Instead, pluck them in leaf form and let them graze on nectar. Once they've had a skinful, they'll blossom just lovely.

KICK IN THE DOOR

When destroying gates or walls, throw yellow Pikmin and bombs three or four at a time. This is a markedly quicker way to destroy structures.

> **NGC READER KNOWLEDGE!**
> *Point your Game Boy Horror at any mirror and click A – you'll warp back to the main hall in Luigi's Mansion.*
> *Joe Kaleth, Brighton*

SUPER MONKEY BALL

GO BANANAS

The easiest way to get a decent banana rating on the end sequence is to hog the side of the track until the bananas appear, at which point you should start to bounce back and forth until the letters start dropping down. Then head back towards the sides to minimise your chances of hitting them. Keep doing this and you'll soon be hitting the heady heights of a Siamang gibbon, a chimpanzee, or even a really ugly mandrill.

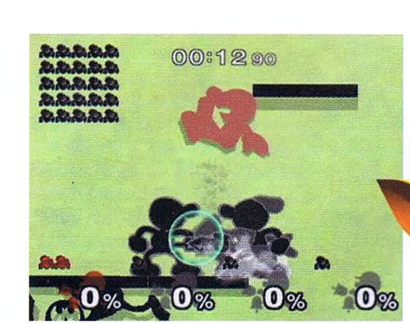
EXTRA FLOORS

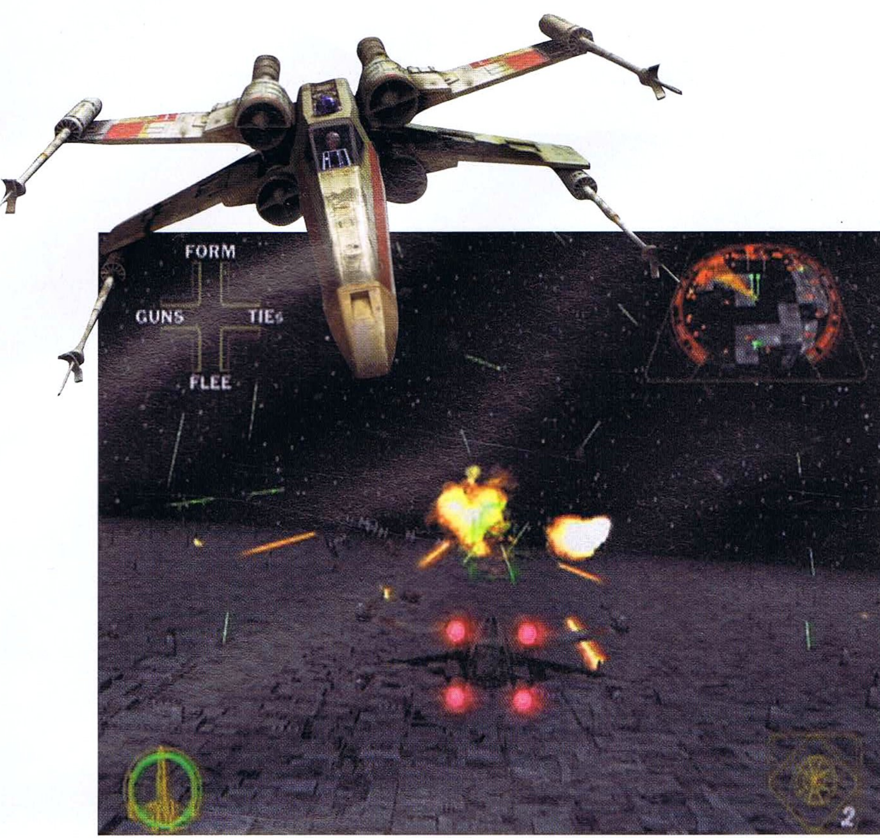
To snap up some tidy little extra floors on beginner and advanced levels, all you need to do is complete the relevant set of levels. Without dying. Even once. Easy, huh?

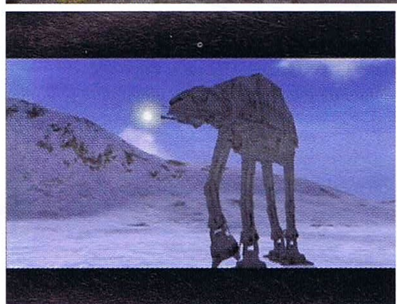


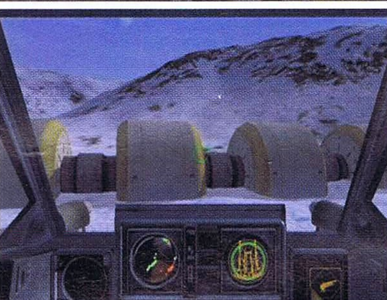












LUIGI'S MANSION

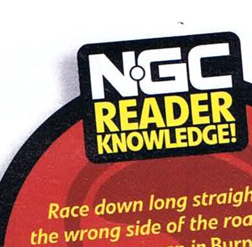
BOO POWER

To successfully hoover up boos, such as the puntastically named Gameboo Advance, Taboo and our favourite, Mr Boojangles, it's better to leave the C-stick alone and instead gently guide them away from walls so that they can't escape.

ROGUE LEADER

UPGRADES

- For advanced shields, turn slightly to the right on Death Star Attack after the cut-scene with the TIEs is shown. See that shiny silver thing up ahead? Grab it.
- For some beefed-up lasers, play the Battle of Hoth level and, after the cut-scene where the AT-AT obliterates the Echo Base's shield generator, return back to where the shield generator used to be – there's your upgrade.
- To snag some exceedingly tasty enhanced proton bombs you'll need to play through the Imperial Academy Heist scenario until you approach the Academy itself. Towards the left of it you should see a hangar, with the upgrade carelessly left lying around within.
- To acquire the homing cluster missiles, play through the Battle of Endor until you've destroyed all the TIE bombers. After the cut-scene, simply stay where you are and look between the star destroyer and the planet for a shimmering light. That's your upgrade.
- For an Advanced Targeting Computer you'll need to be on the Strike at the Core mission. Fly low and to the right when the reactor core appears – under the last set of pipes bracketing the route is the upgrade.

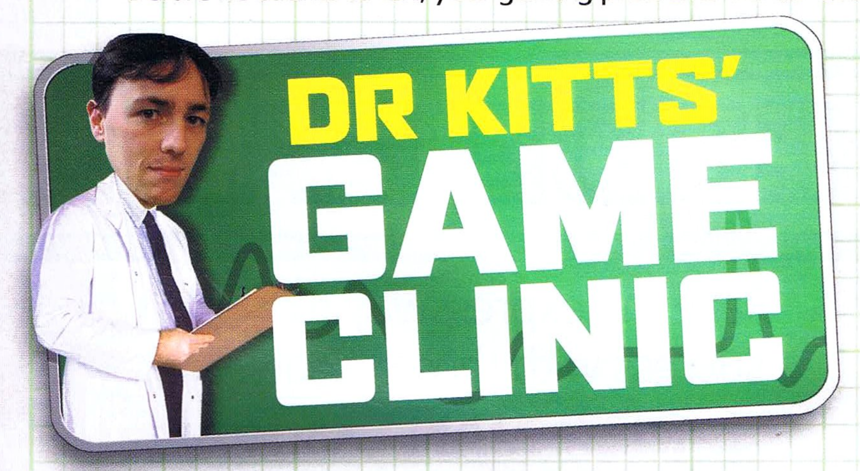


NGC READER KNOWLEDGE!

Race down long straights on the wrong side of the road for as long as you can in Burnout to increase your boost power.

Scott Callard, Devon

Before he counts to ten, your gaming problems will be 'asleep'

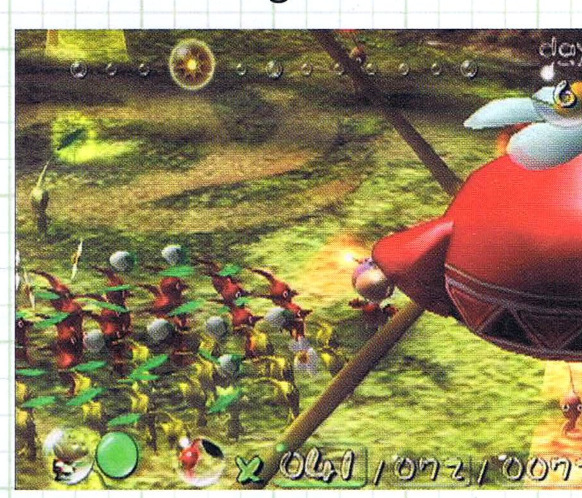


DR KITTS' GAME CLINIC

With a filing cabinet full of gin and a cold, cold stethoscope, Dr Kitts is in diagnosis…

Dr Kitts,
For the life of me I just cannot manage to get a decent score when hitting home runs on *Super Smash Bros*. Have you got any tips on improving my swing?
Don Isley, Crystal Palace

Dr Kitts disputes the very existence of the metatarsal bone…
For maximum smackage, you're best to play as that rogue Bowser. After grabbing the bat, dash right until you're next to the bag. Now juggle it five times in the air by using Smash Up and A. Once you've reached the magic number of five juggles, simply take a step back and smack the darn thing with the edge of your bat. You should now be looking at a distance of over 1000 feet. Should be.



Dr Kitts,
I'm in love with those little Pikmin, but it's breaking my heart to see them get demolished by that nasty final boss. Any clues as to how I save the little fellas?
Katherine Mansfield, via email

Dr Kitts conducts his own Big Brother experiment with midgets…
Ah, I see Emperor Bulbax is giving you some problems. What you need to do is take 25 yellow and 75 red of your best Pikmin along to the battle. Gather bombrocks with the yellows, then wake the beast up and throw a yellow Pikmin with a bombrock into the arena. After Emperor Bulbax eats it up, throw your red Pikmin on his face. Now rinse and repeat if required.

Dr Kitts,
Wave Race is giving me an absolute headache. I can get to the front of the pack easily enough, but I'm having difficulty staying there. Any advice?
Michael Grant, London



Dr Kitts declines an invitation to speak about his unwanted ginger back hair on a daytime TV show…
As crashing into immovable objects can quickly relegate you from first to last place, it's best for beginners to avoid speeding off and out of control under the influence of turbos throughout the race. Rather, keep one in store for any unfortunate meetings you have with scenery, and then use it to boost yourself back into contention.

Dr Kitts,
I am totally flummoxed on floor 15 of the advanced set in *Super Monkey Ball*. Help me! Please?
Vicky Anderson, Bristol

Dr Kitts spots an old flame in an issue of Hairy Bikini Women With Rifles…
Ah yes, Super Monkey Ball. *Why, it reminds me of an experiment I once carried out with some spare chimps I had lying around. Anyway, what you need to do on this brown-coloured floor is to make extremely tight turns. The wider your turning circle, the lower down you'll slip and the harder it will be to get back on course.*

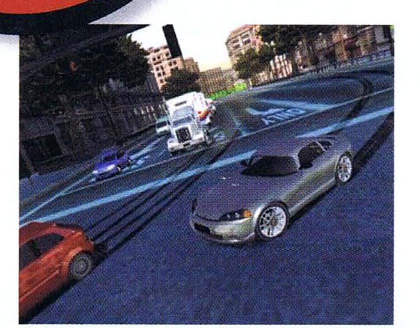


Take the expressway to success with these cheats…

SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE

Enter these codes in the cheat menu for a fun-filled array of effects:

- **CHILLOUT** ensures that the Green Goblin's glider will never overheat.
- **ROMITAS** activates a Next Level option when you're on the in-game pause screen.
- **IMIARMAS** unlocks all the levels.
- **UNDERTHEMASK** gives you a first-person mode.
- **FREAKOUT** makes you walk like a 70s disco icon. Or lets you play in a lovely Goblin suit.
- **KOALA** unlocks all of the secret combo controls.
- **ORGANICWEBBING** gives you an unlimited supply of webbing.
- **HERMANSCHULTZ** lets you play as the aptly named Shocker.
- **GIRLNEXTDOOR** allows you to play as the lovely Mary-Jane.



To get all power moves and 120 achievement points in Batman: Vengeance, just press L, L, R, R, L, R, L, R.

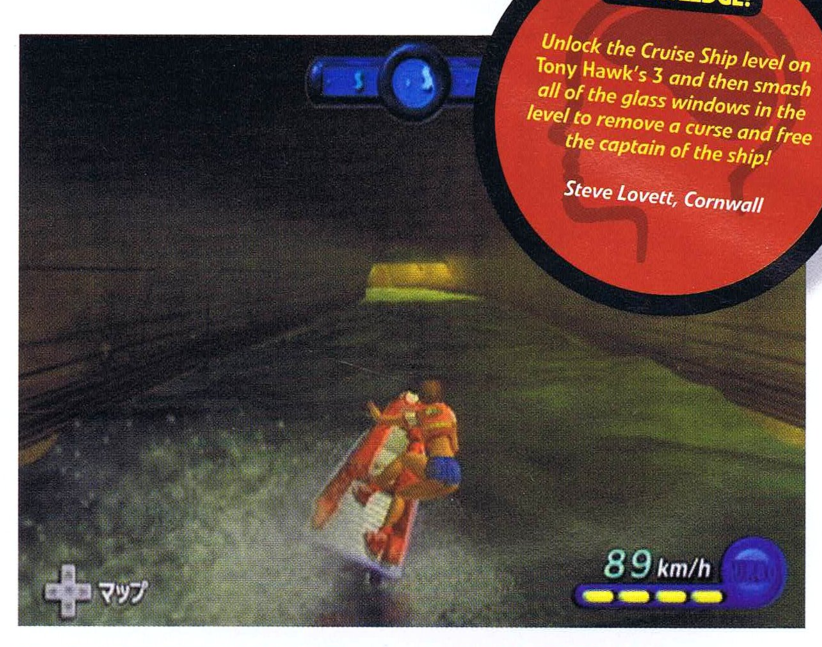
Max Gray, Mowbray

SUPER SMASH BROS

- To fight as a random character, unlock all characters and press **A** in the space to the left of Pikachu and beneath Falco.
- To select a random character in a Winner or Lose Out tournament, hold down **L + R** and press **A**.
- Peach can play dressed as Daisy (Luigi's beau) by holding down **X** or **Y**.
- Mario can dress up as Wario by using **X** or **Y** to change his attire.
- Captain Falcon sports an alternative logo if you press **X** or **Y** until his shirt turns a hazy shade of magenta. Zoom in with the camera to check it out.
- Press **X** or **Y** when choosing Ice Climbers until the one with the fly-catching open mouth, Nana, is at the front. Now if Popo is hit too hard, Nana will still be left to fight on.

BURNOUT

- To gain access to all the racers, press **X + Y + B** on the options screen.
- Extra va-va vooom! For a even quicker start, jam your hoof on the accelerator immediately before the number '1' fades out on the pre-race countdown.



NGC READER KNOWLEDGE!

Unlock the Cruise Ship level on Tony Hawk's 3 and then smash all of the glass windows in the level to remove a curse and free the captain of the ship!

Steve Lovett, Cornwall

WAVE RACE BLUE STORM

- Access the password screen by simultaneously holding down **Start**, **Z** and **Y** on the options screen, and then entering **MJV8LKL6** to unlock the La Razza Canal in Time Attack mode.

SSX TRICKY

- The cheat menu is accessed by unlocking all the characters, and then completing the world circuit in the following order: JP; Mac; Psymon; Zoe; Eddie; Mike; Brodi; Kaori; Luther; Marisol. Once complete, there should then be a Cheats option in the Single Event screen, from which you can select a whole host of cheats.
- To play as Mix Master Mike – a man who comes equipped with a pair of decks on his back and a board made of vinyl – hold down **L + R** on the title screen and then press **X, X, R, X, X, Down, X, X, Left, X, X, Up**. Now when you choose a boarder they will be replaced by emcee Mike. Re-enter the code to disable the effect.

ROGUE LEADER

- To play the Endurance level, enter **?WCYBRTC** then **??MBC???** on the password screen.
- To open Ace mode, enter **U!?!VWZC** then **GIVEITUP** on the password screen.
- To fly in Darth Vader's TIE fighter, enter **NYM!UUOK** then **BLKHLMT!** on the password screen.
- To play in a car, enter **!ZUVIEL!** and then **!BENZIN!** as passwords.
- To start any mission quickly in the default ship, hold **L + R** when selecting it.

SUPER MONKEY BALL

- You can skip the lengthy end credits by holding down **L + R** and then **repeatedly hitting the A-button** when they appear.
- In a monkey race, press **L + R + A + X + Y** at any time to instantly finish the race.



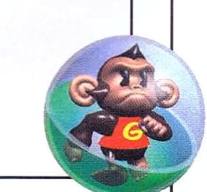
YOUR TOP TIPS Share the knowledge and bag yourself a prize…

Found an interesting cheat, tip, secret or quirky thing in one of your games? Want to share it with others? Then send it into us immediately! Each month we'll stick the best into our new Readers' Tips section – In return, if your tip is the numero uno readers' tip we'll send you a Gamecube game of your choice. Sound good? Then don't hesitate – do it!

HERE'S MY TOP TIP...

IT'S FOR

AND THIS IS HOW IT WORKS



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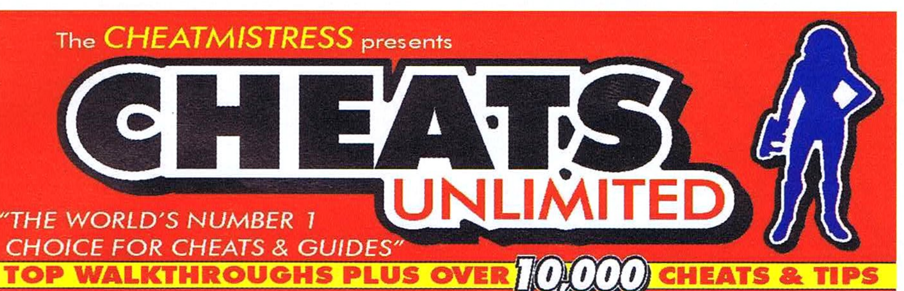
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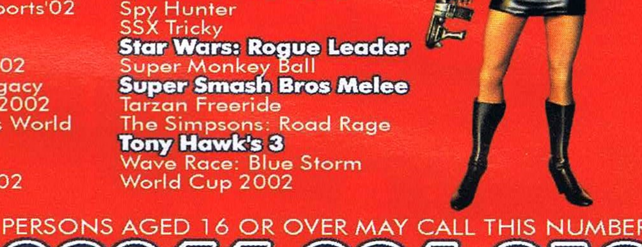
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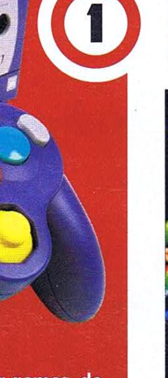


YOU AIN'T NUTHIN' TIL YER IN THE BESTEST, HOT-DANG DIGGITY GAMES LEAGUES EVER! YEEHAH!

I'M THE BEST



1 STAR PERFORMANCE





Like playing games, do you? Think you're pretty good? At games? Then look at these pages hard. HARD. Do they fill you with intense, unadulterated scorn and contempt for the pond-scrapings who currently grace the tops of these hallowed tables, not knowing how utterly, utterly worthless their pathetic miserable entries are, how they shrivel in comparison with your mighty achievements? How they dance in the fast-fading light of their own dim glory? How much they *suck*?

Well, if that's your thinking, we can only suggest you put your cash where your crack is (your mouth-crack, that is) and send in your efforts. After a few false starts the leagues are nicely oiled-up and running at full-steam, like a big gaming Virgin train. Well, a regular train, anyway. Whatever – it's time to get on board! Er, yes! And don't forget to keep an eye out for new leagues over the coming months…

2 It was open season to beat **Paul Roger**'s score of 117,035,000 Gs in *Luigi's Mansion* last month – and by jiffy did you give it a drubbing in your droves! Just cast your eyeballs to the image above to see the awful evidence of **East Sussex**'s **Jamie Butters**' stupefyingly big total of 184,060,000Gs. Not bad? Well, no doubt some self-satisfied wag with thumbs and an ego the size of melons will write in next week with an even bigger amount of coinage under their belt, but for the moment this is definitely 'Da Boss'. We even rang Mark "Greener 24/7" Green with the news that his newly-rubbish 'score' had been left weeping in the dust, but he just started shouting at us in a strange, German-sounding voice and slammed the phone down very, very hard. Anyway, it's a joypad and a 'special' certificate for Jamie, and a non-*Luigi's* Star Performance next month (hopefully).







3 HOW TO PROVE YOUR ACHIEVEMENT

When sending us evidence of your gaming achievements, it's useful to follow these steps…

PHOTOGRAPHS

If you're sending us photographic evidence:

1. Turn off the camera's flash (or cover it up) to prevent it from reflecting off the screen.
2. Make sure there's no sunlight coming into the room.
3. Use a fast film (a 200 or 400 ASA).
4. If you're using a digicam then use a slower shutter speed.
5. Point at the screen and click away.

PLEASE NOTE: In the past we've had experience of certain scamps 'fiddling' with their photographic evidence, so this time round we're being extra-specially (is that right?) careful. We would, in fact, welcome video evidence over photographic evidence. If, however, you can only send photos, be warned: any doubts over the legality of your entry will lead to instant disqualification, and jeering. Harsh but fair, we feel.

VIDEO

If you're going to be sending us the evidence that comes on a tape, follow these instructions carefully:

1. Plug the TV lead from the Gamecube into the Signal In socket of your video.
2. Connect the Signal Out socket on your video to your TV.
3. Once everything is switched on, find a spare channel on the video and search for the signal.
4. After completing and recording the challenge, send us the tape (rewound back to the beginning if you please).

NGC YOUR BEST PERFORMANCE

4 HERE'S MY BEST PERFORMANCE…

LUIGI'S MANSION

Total number of Gs ....
Time taken to beat final boss ....
....

WAVE RACE

Aspen Lake best race time..............................
Lost Temple Lagoon stunt score ....
Southern Island lap time..............................

ROGUE LEADER

Battle of Endor kills..............................
Death Star Attack accuracy ....
Star Destroyer fastest time ....

TONY HAWK'S 3

The Foundry highest score ....
Canada highest trick combo..............................
Rio highest score..............................

SONIC 2

Juggernaut Level number of rings ....
Escape from the Military Base best time..............................
....

CRAZY TAXI

Ten-Minute Mode most money.. ....
Crazy Jump longest jump..............................
Crazy Drift combo..............................

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LUIGI'S MANSION



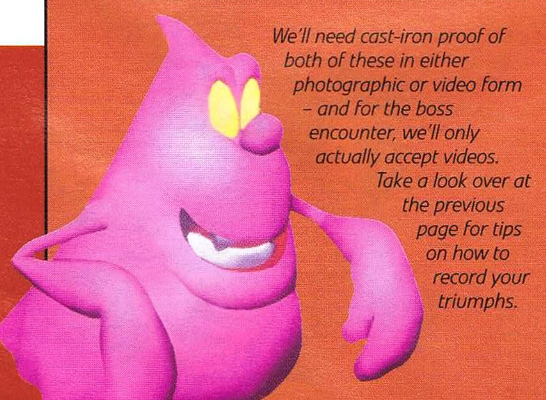
See how many Gs you can notch up at the end of the game.

1	Jamie Butters, East Sussex	184,060,000G
2	Lee McIntyre, Exeter	173,330,000G
3	Andrew Foster, Ilkley	163,080,000G
4	Christopher Collins, Hampshire	147,540,000G
5	Sean Hinton, Kidderminster	140,100,000G



See how long it takes you to dispose of the final boss.

1	Grover Mitchell, Newport	139 secs
2	Alex Gough, Rochdale	142 secs
3	Jonathan Bisaby, Leicester	144 secs
4	Kelvin Murphy, Taunton	151 secs
5	Dave Badcock, Nuneaton	153 secs



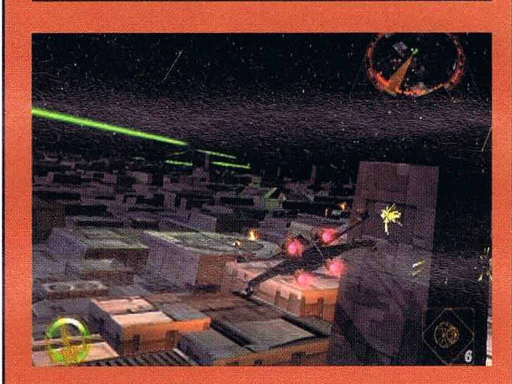
We'll need cast-iron proof of both of these in either photographic or video form – and for the boss encounter, we'll only actually accept videos. Take a look over at the previous page for tips on how to record your triumphs.

STAR WARS: ROGUE LEADER



Most kills on Battle on Endor (you must win at least a Bronze medal).

1	Daniel Ashmore, Cheshire	86
2	Mark Spencer, Galloway	79
3	Ben Fitch, Carlisle	72
4	Ian Scart, Manchester	68
5	Jan Dolby, Denmark	65



Highest accuracy on Death Star Attack.

1	Ashley Coe, Middlesex	69%
2	Reece Croft, Pontefract	63%
3	Daniel Ashmore, Cheshire	62%
4	James McCabe, Derry	60%
5	Ian Scart, Manchester	59%

Fastest time achieved taking out the Star Destroyer in Razor Rendezvous.

1	Daniel Ashmore, Cheshire	0:52
2	Jeff Baker, Newport	0:53
3	Richard Tee, Ayr	0:52
4	Michael Carson, York	1:00
5	Marco Llewelyn, Wales	1:02

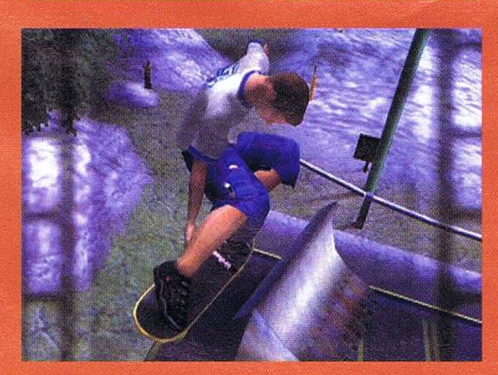
Hey! Travelling through hyperspace ain't like dustin' crops, boy. Whatever relevance that has to anything at all, ever. A photo of your scores at the end of the level will just about do – but video is, as ever, preferable.

TONY HAWK'S 3



Highest point score on The Foundry level.

1	David Peacock, Co Durham	3,886,325
2	Francis Gover, London	1,530,200
3	Alex Costello, Coventry	962,243
4	Calvin McDonald, Troon	934,980
5	Robert Kilpatrick, Switzerland	467,992



Highest trick combo on the Canada level.

1	David Peacock, Co Durham	3,886,325
2	Gary Lord, Hull	2,173,200
3	Michael Ejih, Netherlands	1,264,190
4	James Bergerac, Richmond	900,334
5	Trevor Carnaby, London	732,460

Highest score on the Rio level.

1	David Peacock, Co Durham	2,574,133
2	Richard McCord, Norwich	2,478,920
3	Conor Shea, Cork	1,936,700
4	Gary Lord, Hull	1,921,333
5	Alvin, Dundee	1,110,754

Remember, Tony Hawk's 3 is blinkin' hard, so you'll need to put in the hours – once you have, get us your proof of the end screen in either photographic or, preferably, videographic form. Ta very much.

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WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM





Your best race time on Aspen Lake in easy mode.

1	Martin McManus, Edinburgh	1'26"381
2	Justin Spacek, Aberystwyth	1'39"130
3	Carl Miller, Isle of Wight	1'41"222
4	Charles Napier, Birmingham	1'47"398
5	Richard Teignmouth, Leicestershire	1'50"002



Your best stunt score on Lost Temple Lagoon.

1	Paul Beesley, Leeds	1'03'143
2	Sam Carr, Newport	1'04"894
3	Jon Grey, Newport	1'04"910
4	Justin Space, Aberystwyth	1'05"324
5	Gary Lord, Hull	1'08"597

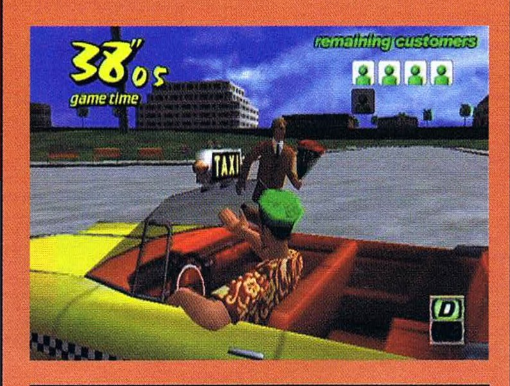
Your best lap time on Southern Island in easy mode.

1	Martin McManus, Edinburgh	0'25"446
2	David Spackman, Kent	0'32"120
3	Adam Stone, Chichester	0'36"980
4	Stephen Blake, Brighton	0'37"683
5	Jon Grey, Newport	0'39"110

Fancy some? Again, we'll need cast-iron proof of your achievements – video is our choice medium, although we may also accept some photographic evidence, provided – of course – that it hasn't been altered or messed with in some way.

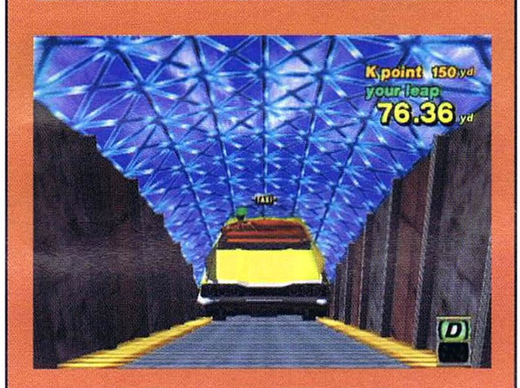
CRAZY TAXI





How much money you can nab in the Ten Minute Mode.

1	Alistair Kendall, Bristol	$12,340
2	Billy Keach, Essex	$11,693
3	Karl Davies, Lanarkshire	$9,520
4	Sam Carr, Newport	$9,462
5	Calvin McDonald, Troon	$9,014



What your longest jump in Crazy Jump is.

1	Alistair Kendall, Bristol	351.63
2	Jonny Elstree, Nottingham	346.98
3	Billy Keach, Essex	339.81
4	Nicky Day, Chester	339.73
5	Gary Lord, Hull	328.91

What's your highest Crazy Drift combo?

1	Billy Keach, Essex	19
2	Nicky Day, Chester	17
3	Alistair Kendall, Bristol	15
4	David Spence, Rochester	14
5	Iain Hansen, Tewkesbury	13

For this one, we'll accept photographic or video evidence, but we won't accept 'fiddled-with' photos and we won't accept bribes, either. You know who you are… Well, on second thoughts, it depends how much you're offering.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2





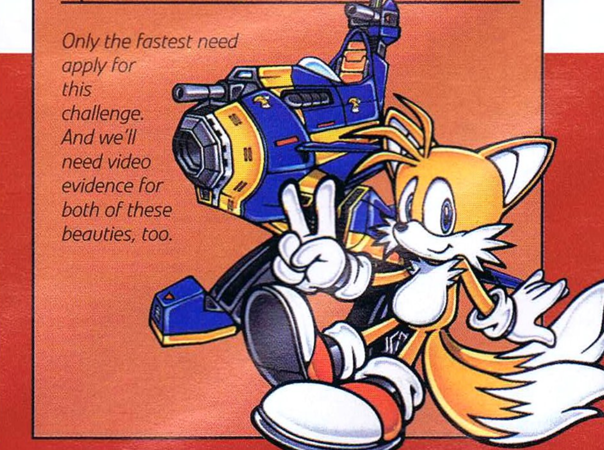
How many rings you can get at the end of the Juggernaut chase section.

1	Jason Roberts, Stockport	87
2	Tim Johnson, Bucks	85
3	David Nielson, Yeovil	83
4	James Coleridge, N Yorks	78
5	Nicholas Gill, Exeter	77



What time you can notch up on Escape from the Military Base.

1	Nicholas Gill, Exeter	01:47:59
2	Jason Roberts, Stockport	01:51:43
3	Alan Farrier, Plymouth	01:51:48
4	Tim Johnson, Bucks	01:55:32
5	Richard Hood, Ayr	02:02:46



Only the fastest need apply for this challenge. And we'll need video evidence for both of these beauties, too.



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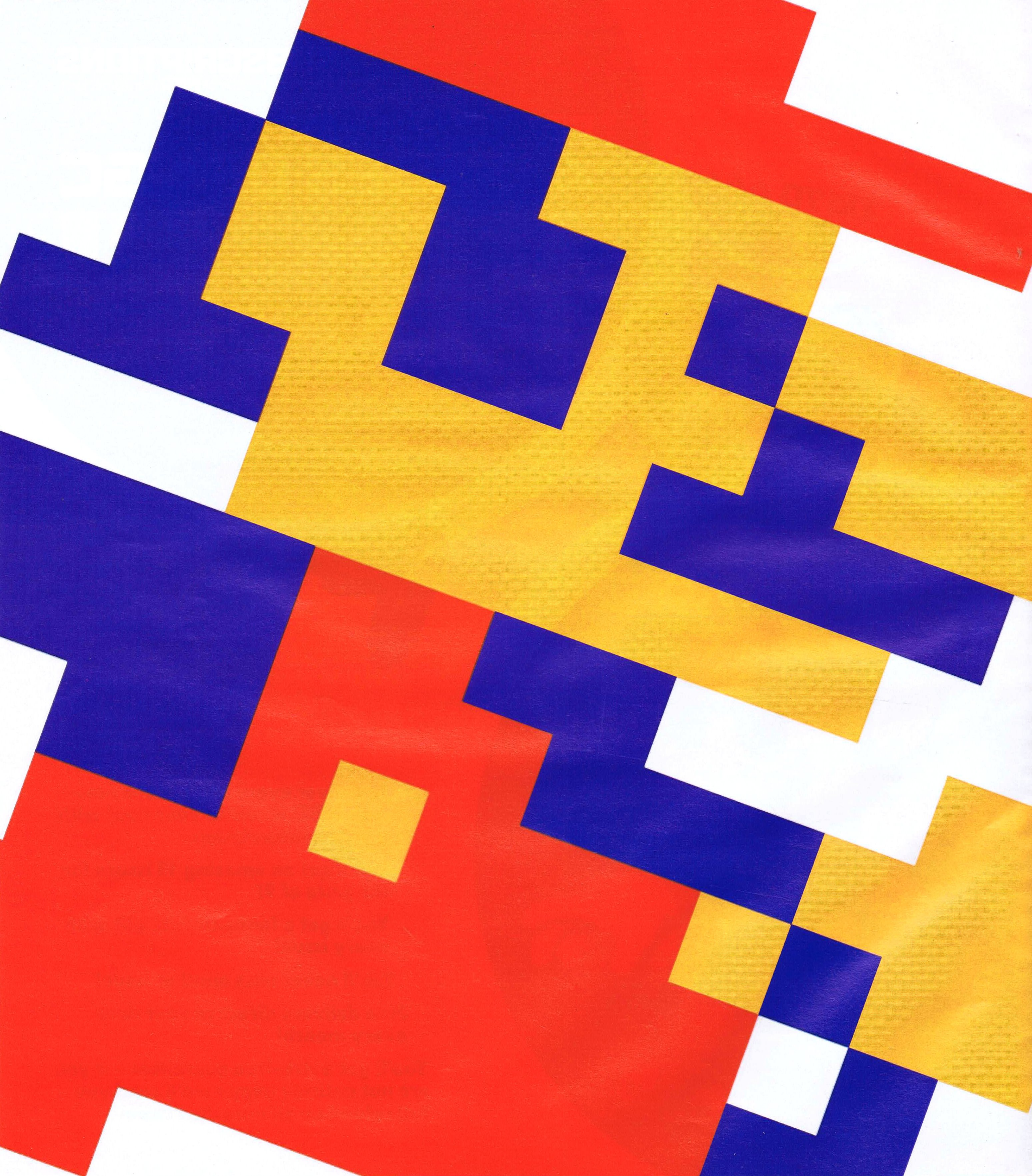
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'Secure the likes'

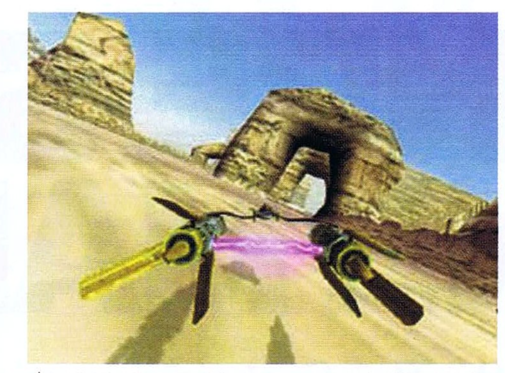
So Nintendo have secured six *Resident Evil* games for Gamecube and, in doing so, captured that elusive 'mature market' in one fell swoop, right?

Wrong.

I'm not criticising the *Resi* games as such, but Nintendo are failing, firstly, to distinguish between 'mature' and 'gory'. If Nintendo want developers to deliver truly mature games, they need to let those developers get on with making games and get on with being creative. But, whether it's *Body Harvest* or *Metroid Prime*, The Big N just can't help but get involved. This has, as we've seen with both games, a really detrimental effect on their development. Secondly, and following on from this, if they want to corner a new audience, they need to do more than just secure the likes of Shinji Mikami and Hideo Kojima. Those particular designers represent a fraction of all the codeshops out there who are making truly mature videogames. Target them, don't just port the PlayStation's greatest hits over.

Will McConnell, Belfast

***Unfortunately we had to cut some of this monster letter due to space limitations but the points you make, Will, are excellent. Don't underestimate how important the* Resident Evil *brand is, though. You might not personally be a fan, but it's sold millions and millions of PlayStations for Sony – if it can do the same for Nintendo then they'll be very happy. We take your point about Nintendo sometimes being overbearing as far as their developers are concerned, but the end product is more often than not worth it. You only have to see the transformation* Metroid *has undergone to realise that Nintendo, however heavy-handed they can be, really do know how to make a game. And if it means treading on a few toes then so be it. Compare and contrast Nintendo and Sony at E3 to see it in black and white: Nintendo's external studios had* Metroid *and* Starfox*. Sony had* The Getaway*, a £7 million project that's total crud.* Ed**



△ ***Episode I Racer*** **making an appearance in Attack of the Clones was almost as surprising as the film being good.**

'Anakin walk'

Did anyone else notice that, in Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones, when Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anakin walk into that bar after chasing down the assassin, *Star Wars: Episode I Racer* is playing on the television screens behind them?

Joe Bayley, Surrey

***We certainly did. We also noticed that it wasn't Geraint in the Jango Fett suit, after all. Strange.* Ed**

'Mario's boot'

I read last month's Star Letter with interest, and it reminded me of something. Quote, issue 68, page 8: "We promise not to ruin your enjoyment of forthcoming games by giving away major details, plot twists or surprises. How's that for you?" Well, it's great. Except on pages 60, 61 and 63, you showed a secret character from *Smash Bros.* Luckily I'd seen him before and can't wait to fill his face full of Mario's boot… but just be careful, you know?

Lee Sanders, via email

***Oh, you mean Pichu? Don't worry, we won't tell you that, to get him, you have to beat Event Match 37 and then beat him to win… oh.* Ed**

TXTUS

my ps2 aint been touched since i got gamecube • like the new look guyz ben c • shiggy doll is kinda weird dont you think?

'Big time'

Just thought I'd share this peach with you. Recently, in the magazine Disney's Big Time, they ran a piece on Gamecube, where they previewed *Star Wars: Rogue Leader*. Except they called it Rogue Trader. Sounds like this could be an interesting new direction for the Star Wars games, don't you think?

Carla Hodge, Ipswich

***Rogue Trader, eh? Never realised Nick Leeson made the Kessel Run in under 12 parsecs.* Ed**

Bonus Letters

Surely the weight of your readership will sway the infidels.
Mr N, East Sussex
***Crush them in a bloody massacre, more like.* Ed**

I won't take up any more of your or my time with my fantasies.
Tom Kinch, Northampton
***(Traumatised silence.)* Ed**

Even my dad plays Mario and he's – pffff – old.
William Coleman, via email
***That's pretty old.* Ed**

In **NGC**/68, you said Jes is the world's baldest man. My PE teacher is balder.
Mark Nisbet, Ayrshire
***Doubt it.* Ed**

The traitor returns. Tim Weaverman is a traitor.
Luke Richards, via email
***Nutjob.* Ed**

And that Enjiki. She needs to be more naked…
Tom Enderby, via email
***One for the ladies.* Ed**

Mornin'!

'Pronounced'

In **NGC**/68, you made me the happiest man on Earth when you revealed that *XIII* would be coming to Gamecube. I've read all the books and have never found myself immersed in such an amazing plot. It's got more twists and turns than a… well, it's got a lot of twists and turns, let's just leave it at that. Here's a summary of the storyline: a man is washed up *(Snip! – Ed)* most of the series. Oh, and to answer your question, it's pronounced 'Thirteen'.

I seriously recommend you try and get these books as they're definitely worth a read. Though you have to be able to read French to understand them.

Luke Talbot, via email

***Mmm… That's tossed something of a spanner in the works. A big French spanner, no less.* Ed**



△ **The old Cube adverts. Got a good soundtrack too. A mix of jungle, drum and bass. Erm, we're told.**

'Drum and bass'

This probably sounds a bit weird, but do you know who does the music for the Gamecube adverts? I think it's pretty good – a mix of jungle, drum and bass.

Adrian O'Connor, via email

***Right. Jungle. Anyway, after extensive research it seems the track was created by a guy called Vince Pope, who works for Beetroot Music, a company based in London that creates 'bangin' choons' for TV adverts. But we checked out their website and couldn't see any mention of them doing the Gamecube ads. Odd.* Ed**



HONOURABLE MENTIONS

Thanks to everyone else who wrote, emailed and texted us this month.

You included: Ian Padley, via email; James Sherry, via email; David Jacques, via email; Andries Willems, Belgium; Daniel Smith, West Midlands; Jonathan Wilkinson, Banbury; Teik Wang Khow, via email; Russell Davies, via email; Ed Peckham, via email; Paul Rutter, King's Lynn; Daniel Harris, via email; Robert Taylor, West Sussex; Ben Jordan, Bromsgrove; Kael Morgan, via email; Nicolas Masset, via email; Alec Griffiths, via email; Jason Asante, via email; Grant, via text; Thomas Worthington, via email; Paddy Hynes, via email; David Grieve, Edinburgh; Ian Kilpatrick, Switzerland; Duncan Franklin, via email; Ben Millwood, via email; Nigel Martin, via text; Paul Adams, via





'Insult them'

Okay, I'm puzzled. In issue 68, on EndGC's Shigsy Doll, it shows what looks like Japanese on the left-hand side of the box. But hang on – a closer look reveals that it isn't Japanese at all! I can make out what looks to be some Hiragana, some Katakana, and then some Kanji that's upside down. Just because the majority of people don't speak Japanese doesn't mean you have to insult them by putting down random characters.
Tim McLiden, Australia

Listen up, barbie boy: get hold of issue 68 and look closely at the side of the packaging. That's Kanji, right? Or is it Katakana? Or is it FRICKIN' ENGLISH? Wait till 'Flathead' Fisher hears about this… Ed

'The inevitable'

Zelda. Wow. If it had been anyone else, they would have just been resting on their laurels, but not Shigsy. His relentless pursuit of excellence and courage in giving the most successful franchise in history a facelift has proven him to be the best, most talented games designer in the world. I await the inevitable 'I always liked Celda' comments with baited breath when everyone gets a load of it in gobsmacking action.
Russell Mehrad, via email

I always liked Celda. Ed

'Happy about it'

On page 113 of **NGC**/68, you talk about connecting the Gamecube to a TV via an S-Video cable. One slight problem – PAL Gamecubes don't output S-Video. Sadly, it looks like Nintendo forgot to tell a lot of third-party peripheral manufacturers – I spotted three different types of S-Video lead on sale in Gamestation, Dixons and HMV. I emailed SpectraVideo who do the Logic 3 cables and I got the impression they weren't happy.
Andy Collins, via email

No doubt. To be honest, Nintendo made no mention of this little party trick at any time prior to Gamecube's launch in the UK – indeed, the first we heard of it was when we plugged an S-Video lead into the telly a couple of days after we sent issue 68 to the printers – too late to change things round. In the office, we prefer using Scart and, fortunately, there isn't any problems with that. Ed



△ **The new *Zelda* is possibly the most fantastic-looking game we've ever seen. So, who round here reckoned it would be rubbish? Anyone? No? No-one? What a surprise.**



△ ***Disney's Magical Mirror.*** **It looks nice enough, but does anybody actually CARE about it in the slightest?**

'Disney games'

Although I was pleased with what Nintendo wheeled out at E3 (apart from *Disney's Magical Mirror*), I was disappointed to see the lack of third-party offerings. Take, for example, Konami: instead of bringing across their excellent PlayStation titles such as *Metal Gear*, *ZOE*, *Silent Hill* or – stop me if I'm just being stupid – *something entirely new*, we get snowboarding and skateboarding, Disney games and *Frogger*. Does anybody actually *care* about these?
"Nippon Ya", via email

Disney probably do. But we know what you mean. Konami look like they're playing a bit of a 'wait and see' game with Gamecube – a stark contrast to their 'jump right in' stance on the N64. And odd when you consider everyone else is the total opposite. Ed

'Table'

Damn you, **NGC**. There I was, reading your review of *Rogue Leader* at the breakfast table when my eight-year-old brother started twitching his neck and mumbling about "using the force". Since seeing Attack of the Clones, he only eats when referred to as 'Mace Windu, senior member of the Jedi Council' and after pulling a 'made you look!' trick, mocks me for my lack of Jedi mind-control techniques. Damn you, **NGC**!
Mike Yin, Sheffield

We can see how it's our fault. Ed

'Lost count'

What can I say? I love it! I finally bought a Gamecube and a copy of *Rogue Leader* and it's absolutely brilliant. I lost count of how many papers I delivered to get one… 6am every morning… six days a week… ten quid a week. Don't you think you appreciate something so much more when you've had to work for it? It was so annoying seeing all my mates just get given one by their parents, and there I was working my cheeks off for mine. Still, I can safely say that I'll now appreciate it so much more. Won't I? Er, won't I?
Stephen Myers, Newcastle

Oh, definitely. HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA. Ed

'Exact same'

I swear I have the exact same shirt as Tim in issue 68's Virtual Reality. Did he get it from M&S? £22 was it?
Andrew McCoolshirt, via email

I asked myself and the answer is inconclusive. Ed



CORRECTION CORNER

You! Sprechen sie Deutsch? Oh, that's wrong, is it?

Here's one: on page 111 of issue 68, you say "Sprechen sie Deutsch?" That's wrong. 'Sie' (with a small s) means either 'they' or 'she' although, to be honest, in the context you had it, it could only mean 'they' (because of verb agreement) and it would have to be 'spricht' to match the German for 'she', i.e. "Spricht sie Deutsch?" Hence, you're saying: "Do they speak German?" It makes me wonder who 'they' are – and where do 'they' come from? And why are 'they' plaguing my very existence! Er, anyhoo, it should be "Sprechen Sie Deutsch", with a capital S. In case you are wondering how I know all this, I have been 'doing' German for six years. If I hadn't spotted this mistake I would have considered myself a failure and demanded to be shot, at point blank range, perhaps with a gun from Jud's own collection. Once done, I would have expected my corpse to be fired off in a monkey ball.
Steven Ansell, via email

6/10. Must try harder. Ed

Bonus Letters

You guys are quite stuped.
Will Schaller, via email
Too perfect. Ed

Is there anybody I could email that would pass on a message to the rest of the media and governments?
Paul Ardis, via email
Er, Tony Blair? Ed

I'll have a lock of Paul's finest hair.
Jon Challinor, Stafford
Paul says: "Sounds good. My place or yours?" Ed

Can you get Dr Kitts to go and threaten them with a couple of rusty nails or a dog with rabies?
Andrew Bunting, Ayrshire
Didn't have to ask. Ed

Will they go bust in a few mouths?
Mathew Cooper, via email
No. In a few dacs. Ed

Knowing my luck, it won't be the one you're looking for.
Paul Ellis, Birmingham
It wasn't the one we were looking for. Ed

TXTUS

the cube is the best thing on earth j hopkins • the new look is gr8 • like the look of you all. xxx • can u feel it kittsy?

email; Dan Mason, via email; Graeme Staff, via email; Daniel Ericcson, Storrington; Stephen Kilgannon, Widnes; Chris McAleer, via email; Barry, via email; Ant, via text; Alex O'Connell, West Sussex; Aamir Ilyas, via email; Ryan Hemper, Dursley; Bonny Qvistorff, Denmark; Alex Biddle, via email; Liam Murphy, Bishop's Stortford.

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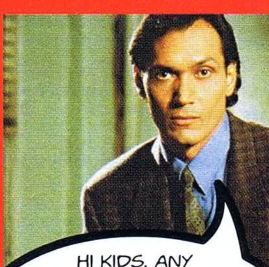
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△ ***Monkey Ball* crashing on your Cube? Give us a shout if you're experiencing problems with games freezing up.**

'Faulty 130'

After purchasing my shiny new purple Cube, it seems to have developed a nasty problem: it keeps locking up and crashing! This has happened on no less than four occasions in the past two days – once playing *Rogue Leader* and three times on *Monkey Ball*. Do you reckon the problem could have something to do with the Nintendo memory card? Or do you just think I've got a faulty 130 quid box sitting under my telly?
Mark Gray, via email

***Interesting. We've had a couple of emails about this but it's not a problem we're aware of, and Nintendo seem unaware of it too. Are there any other* NGC *readers who have had similar problems? If you have, let us know and we'll investigate further.* Ed**

'Invincible'

There's two crucial things missing as far as the Cube is concerned. One: an instant budget label with old N64 classics like *GoldenEye*, *Perfect Dark*, *Paper Mario*, *Zelda: Majora's Mask*, *Donkey Kong* and *F-Zero X*. And two: a shiny little piece of kit that allows you to play Advance games through your TV. Nintendo would be invincible.
Brian Jackson, via email

***We've been talking about a budget label in the office for months. It would be great, wouldn't it? But it's unlikely to come about for a while. Don't discount the possibility of an Advance-TV compatible box, mind.* Ed**

TXTUS

Love the new mag want more dvds. ch ▪ y r you takin da mik out of ger for bein welsh? ▪ new zelda loox incredible.
tony

'Through six'

Fact: less than ten per cent of the UK has access to broadband. Another fact: none of Ireland has. So, why is everyone so preoccupied with Nintendo's online plans? Why is it so important? I have a 56K modem and have gone through six monitors in the past year due to the incredible amount of damage caused to them with my well-aimed fist. 56K modems are *slow* – at times even unplayable. Nintendo see the problem and are kindly letting other companies test the water for them. It would be uneconomical to push millions into the internet even if we had broadband here, but it just seems ludicrous to do it when most of us haven't. What they are doing instead – investing money in the GC-GBA compatibility side of things – makes much more sense and, in fact, I'd rather be playing games that made use of this feature than ones that chug along and break up on my modem.
Evan Heneghan, Ireland

***Couldn't agree more. However, if something like* Quake III *or* Counter-Strike *ever came to the Cube as an online game, we'd be willing to give it a go.* Ed**

'Picking'

Stop picking on the Welsh. Did you know that if Wales was flat it would have a greater surface area than your 'country' England?
Russell Davies, Wales

***Proud Englishman Martin Kitts says: "And did you know that if we detached Wales from England, it would immediately sink into the Irish Sea, sheep, leeks and all?" I must confess, I never realised that. Amazing what you find out.* Ed**

'That Shigsy'

By the way, was that Shigsy doll real?
Matt Jonas, via email

***As real as Jud's love for guns.* Ed**

SO TELL ME THIS… Your specific gaming Qs answered by The Big Friendly Colon…

So I see Konami have announced *Metal Gear Substance* for PS2 – any chance of Gamecube getting a *Metal Gear* game any time soon?
James Lawson, via email

Not likely.* Metal Gear *looks like it's in for the long haul on a* PlayStation *format. However, a* Hideo Kojima *project on Cube isn't out of the question – him and Shigsy have a hefty amount of mutual respect for each other.

1. I've heard that a silver-coloured Cube may be coming out in America. Is this true? And, if so, when will it be coming out here?
2. What's the news on the higher capacity Gamecube memory card?
S Orbell, via email

1. Lies. There's a silver-coloured GBA coming out soon, though.
2. Out in June in Japan. No news on a release here, though we'd hazard a guess on it appearing later on in the year or early next.

Will there ever be a device for Gamecube that lets us play DVDs?
Ross Arnott, via email

No. The disc tray is too small and there's no DVD software in the chips. You're only hope is that Nintendo decide to release the Q over here. Which they won't.

With Eidos now doing games for the Gamecube, what are the chances of a *Tomb Raider* sequel?
Marcus Myers, via email

Not great – like* Metal Gear*, Lara is very much PlayStation property. However, if Eidos end up being bought – which is looking increasingly likely – whoever buys them might consider guiding Crofty onto another format. But we wouldn't bet on it happening for a while.

1. I am a massive motorbike fan. What's the chance of games like *MotoGP* and *World Superbike* coming to a Gamecube near us?
2. Any chance of *Blast Corps* making a return on the Cube?
Tony Jenkins, via email

1. Unfortunately not. The nearest you're going to get to powering about on a bike is when* Mat Hoffman Pro BMX 2 *comes out on Gamecube. But, of course, there's no engines in that.
2. Wouldn't have thought so. The first* Blast Corps *was a real stinker in terms of sales – not a great reason to do a follow-up.

1. Have you got a release date for *Eternal Darkness* and *Starfox Adventures* over here yet?
2. What's the story with *Kameo*?
Alex Cavey, via email

1.* Eternal Darkness *is October and* Starfox Adventures *is November. Should make for a good run up to Christmas. We'll have a US review of* Eternal Darkness *for you next issue.
2. Good question. No one really wants to comment on it, though sources tell us it's still on for the Gamecube, probably in 2003.

What's the chances of a Predator game coming to Gamecube, then?
Luke Burman, via email

Unlikely for the time being, we're afraid – but it would make a cracking licence, wouldn't it?


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NGC ESSENTIAL

THE BEST CUBE GAMES MONEY CAN BUY...

FIVE GAMES TO MAKE YOUR MIND EXPLODE

Rogue Leader and *Tony Hawk's* are all very well, but Nintendo games have always been at their best when it comes to *crazy games of controlled mayhem that make your brain hurt.*



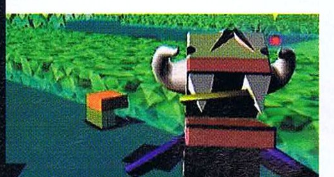
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SUPER SMASH BROS



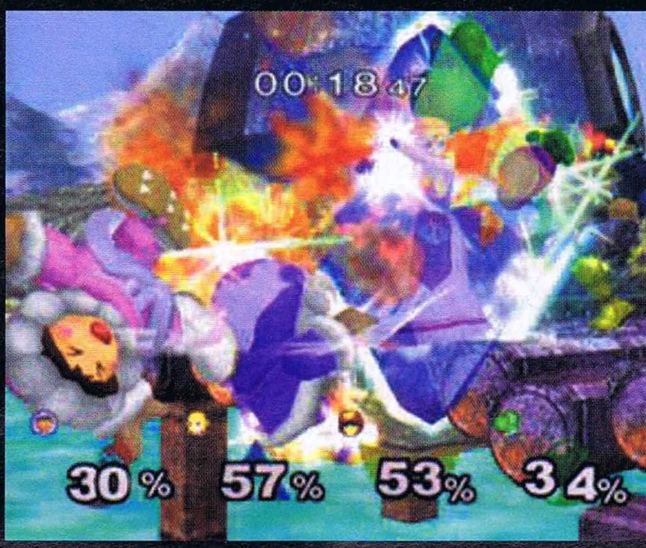
SUPER MONKEY BALL



ANIMAL LEADER IMPORT



RAVE: THE GROOVE ADVENTURE IMPORT



1 SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

NINTENDO ■ NGC/68 ■ 95

Eye-singeing multiplayer battles, ingenious power-ups and moves, brilliant cameo appearances from just about every Nintendo character ever to set foot inside a cartridge, plus some of the sweetest looks yet squeezed from the Cube – *Smash Bros* is everything you went purple for and more. If people are telling you this is a game for kids then the fools plainly haven't played it.



2 WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM



NINTENDO ■ NGC/67 ■ 91

In PAL form this sodden sequel might suffer from some *tiny* frame-rate problems, but it's still a fabulous racer, replete with *the* most incredible water effects ever. Fast, dynamic, accessible and sublime to control, *Wave Race* is absolute magic.



3 LUIGI'S MANSION

NINTENDO ■ NGC/67 ■ 90

Mazza might have been late to the party this time round, but brother Luigi managed to ease the pain with this fantastically playable combination of *Super Mario World* and Ghostbusters. It's maybe a bit short, but still ace.



4 SUPER MONKEY BALL



SEGA ■ NGC/67 ■ 88

Ingenious update of *Marble Madness*, with simians rolling around strange landscapes trying to collect 'nanas. Chuck in a monkey version of *Mario Kart*, pool, some golf and a tilting boxing ring with springy boxing gloves and you've got the weirdest, most wonderful Gamecube game out.

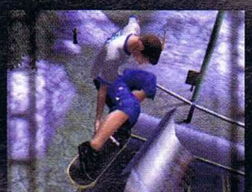
5 STAR WARS: ROGUE LEADER



ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68 ■ 87

Without a doubt, the best-looking console game ever made, *Rogue Leader* also happens to be one of the slickest, most memorable Star Wars games of all time, bolting eye-popping renditions of the Battle of Hoth and the Trench Run onto silky smooth space battles. Get it in now.

6 TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3



ACTIVISION ■ NGC/67 ■ 87

It's clearly a no-brainer of a PS2 conversion, but *Tony Hawk's 3* is so good it hardly seems to matter. Packed with unbelievable grinds and stunts, backed up by a mountain of hidden extras, and benefiting from vast skate parks, if you haven't tried *Hawk's* on for size before, now's the time.

7 SSX TRICKY



EA SPORTS ■ NGC/69 ■ 87

Like *Tony Hawk's*, this has got PS2 written all over it in big, fat neon letters, but it still manages to perform wonders with your Cube. Fast, spectacular courses, brilliant shortcuts and secrets and some timely mid-piste scrappage make this conversion brilliant, *brilliant* entertainment.

8 BURNOUT

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67 ■ 86

On the N64, we had to wait three years for a driving game. Now we've got a killer racer from day one: with lightning-fast, spectacular crashes, inch-perfect handling and one of the smoothest, most impressive engines around, *Burnout* is a dream of a game, even if it's over a bit quickly.

9 PIKMIN





NINTENDO ■ NGC/69 ■ 85
Dreamily created using textures from Shigsy's own garden, *Pikmin* is a genius real-time strategy with multi-coloured vegetables, beautifully simple controls and expansive, tactile worlds. It's over a bit quickly if truth be told, but don't let that put you off: this is Nintendo brilliance.

10 ISS 2







KONAMI ■ NGC/68 ■ 83
This once-untouchable football giant makes its debut on Gamecube sporting a few nasty cuts and bruises, including a lack of pace, huge turning circles and 'sweet spots'. Even so, it still rates as a majestic example of footie in a disc, even though an *ISS* with faults is hard to stomach.

11 EXTREME G 3







ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67 ■ 85
A bit of an underrated gem, *Extreme G 3* offers pulse-shattering speed, huge, sprawling, well-designed tracks, some ingenious – and surprisingly tactical – weaponry and eye-spanking visuals. It's a tiny bit soulless, and the multiplayer's a bit rank, but this is good stuff.

12 BLOODY ROAR: PRIMAL FURY







ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68 ■ 74
Okay, so *Smash Bros* pummels it so hard it's about ten feet into the canvas, but *Bloody Roar* still manages to offer some quick, exciting punch play, and comes with the added bonus of some dual-action characters. One of which changes into a rabbit. And another into a Gecko.

13 SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE









ACTIVISION ■ NGC/69 ■ 72
A brain-bendingly *terrible* camera threatens to do more than make your Spidey sense tingle, but this 3D adventure grows on you the more you play it, and for fans of the comics there are some really neat little touches, as well as timely comebacks for the likes of Scorpion and The Vulture.

14 SONIC ADVENTURE 2: BATTLE





SEGA/INFOGRAMES ■ NGC/67 ■ 70
It moves like greased weasel-turd, it looks beautiful, it's solid enough – but this sequel is underwhelming, dressed in next-gen gear but sporting Mega Drive-era ideas. It offers some intriguing GBA connectivity – shame more isn't made of this part of it.

15 CRAZY TAXI





SEGA/ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67 ■ 70
It's as good as it was on Dreamcast and PS2, but that's just the point: *Crazy Taxi* is *old*, and nothing's been done to update it for its Gamecube release. Shame, because with a bit of polish this could have found a new lease of life – as it is, it's still excellent fun, if a little elderly.

16 NBA COURTSIDE 2002





NINTENDO ■ NGC/68 ■ 79
Well, Nintendo might have called a day on Left Field, but the US developers have certainly gone out with a bang – shame it's basketball, really. If you're 'into' sport, you'll appreciate the gameplay parallels between this and *ISS*, otherwise it'll just seem like another boring hoop game.

17 NHL HITZ 20-02





MIDWAY ■ NGC/67 ■ 79
Ice hockey is probably the most acceptable of American sports, and *NHL Hitz 20-02* proves to be genuine fun in places, with super-slick, fast-paced puck action. Behind the scenes, this is great as well, with trade-ins, player creation and a neat behind-the-scenes documentary. Good stuff.

18 DAVE MIRRA BMX 2





ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67 ■ 75
The problem with *Dave Mirra 2* is that it's simply not as good as PlayStation favourite *Mat Hoffman*. Which is a shame, because at its heart beats a decent game, packed with stunts and tricks, expansive arenas and a great soundtrack. But none of that is quite enough to make this a real must-buy.

19 BATMAN: VENGEANCE





UBI SOFT ■ NGC/67 ■ 70
You could find yourself pleasantly surprised by this 3D beat-'em-up featuring Bats and The Joker. In fact, you won't just find yourself surprised, you'll find yourself well entertained thanks to a clunk-free control system, some tidy graphics and plenty of corny voice acting from Mark Hamill.

20 DRIVEN





BAM! ■ NGC/68 ■ 60
Sneaking in at number 20 is this solid effort from BAM! – though don't expect to see it hanging round for very long. While the software numbers are somewhere around the 30 mark, you might want to give this street racer a go – especially for its decent New York track. Otherwise, forget it.

EVERY GAMECUBE GAME EVER ...RATED!



SPY HUNTER



CEL DAMAGE

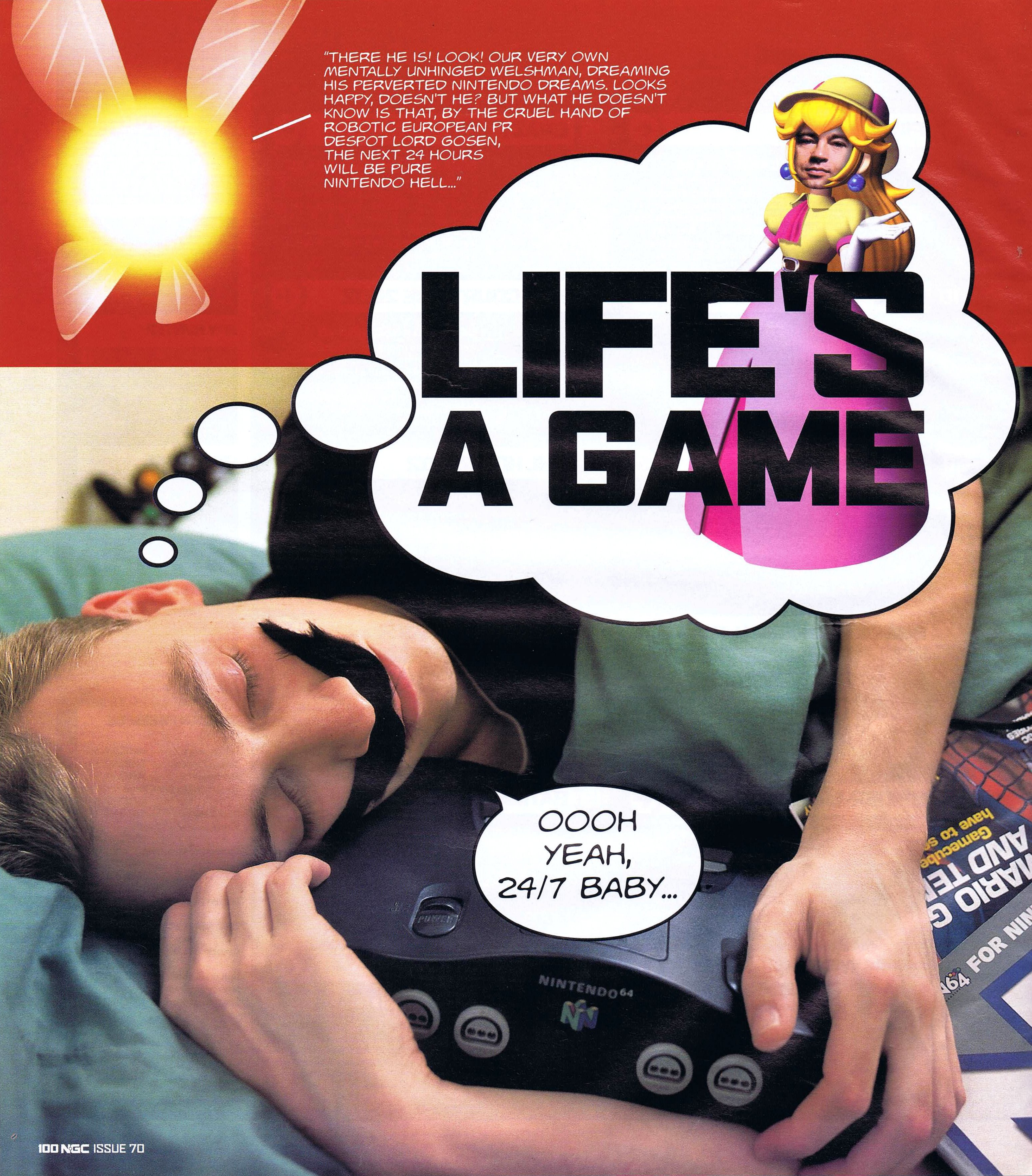


DRIVEN



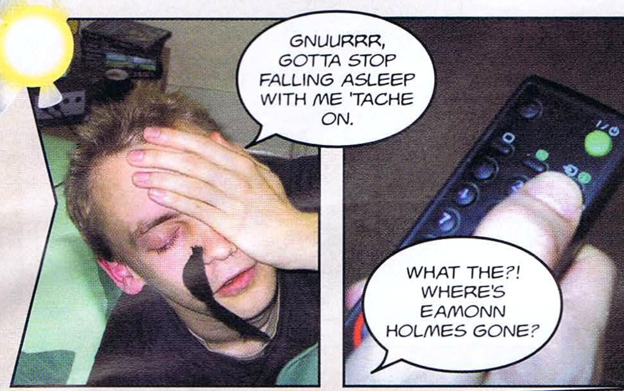
TARZAN FREERIDE

Game	Issue, Score
Cel Damage	NGC/68, 60
Tarzan Freeride	NGC/67, 59
Spy Hunter	NGC/68, 55
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Jeremy McGrath Supercross World	NGC/69, 20


"THERE HE IS! LOOK! OUR VERY OWN MENTALLY UNHINGED WELSHMAN, DREAMING HIS PERVERTED NINTENDO DREAMS. LOOKS HAPPY, DOESN'T HE? BUT WHAT HE DOESN'T KNOW IS THAT, BY THE CRUEL HAND OF ROBOTIC EUROPEAN PR DESPOT LORD GOSEN, THE NEXT 24 HOURS WILL BE PURE NINTENDO HELL..."
LIFE'S A GAME
OOOH YEAH, 24/7 BABY...

MORNING...

"DAY BREAKS, AND THE UNSUSPECTING VICTIM OF THIS BIZARRE EXPERIMENT IS ABOUT TO AWAKE. THE FIRST CHALLENGE OF THE DAY BEING WHETHER OR NOT HE CAN ACTUALLY HAUL HIMSELF OUT OF BED."

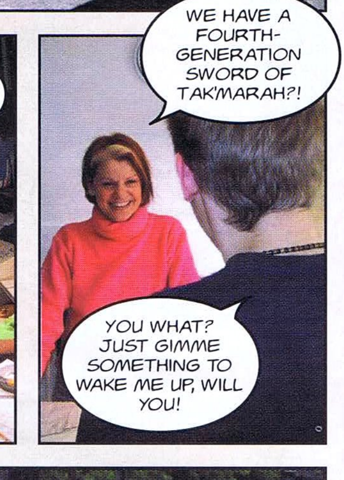






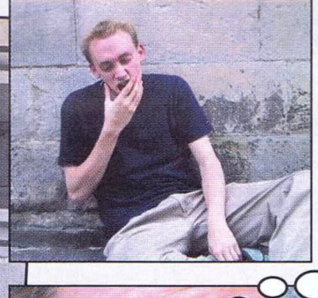










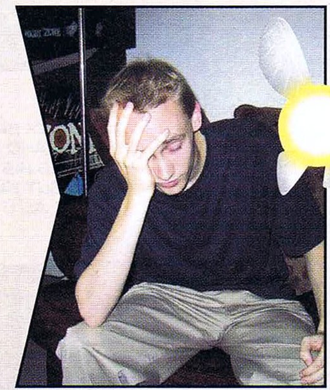






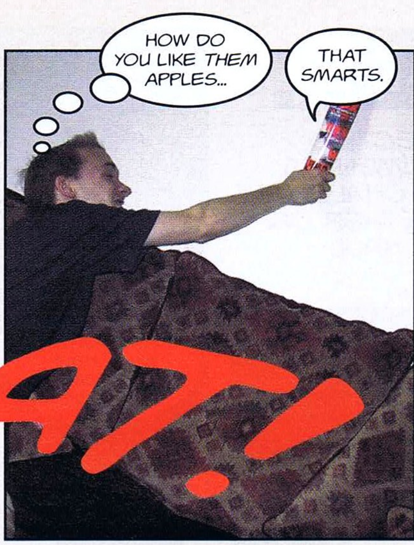


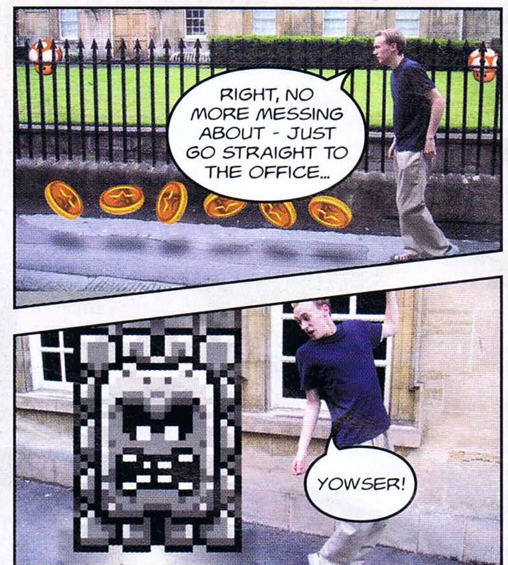
AFTERNOON



OH DEAR, EVANS. MISSION FAILURE IS IT? BACK AT THE START AGAIN ARE WE, EH? HEH HEH, SOME HARDCORE GAM...

SPLAT!





WHAT THE?!? THEY MUST HAVE CHANGED THE CODE.

HI. IT'S GERAINT, CAN YOU LET ME IN PLEASE?

ARE YOU CEL-SHADED?

ERM... NOPE.

DO YOU HAVE THE SACRED STONES?

EH? NO, WHY?

WELL, WE'LL BE SEEING YOU LATER. MUCH LATER!

AAAAA! AAAAAAA! ARRGH!

DON'T TAKE IT OUT ON ME, PAL. NO STONES, NO ENTRY - IT'S THE RULES.

WHY DON'T YOU TRY ASKING THE LOCALS FOR SOME HELP? HOW ABOUT HIM OVER THERE?

YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT? LOOK AT HIM! HEY PAL, WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?!

DIDN'T I SEE YOU IN FIFA 2002?

I'M DOOMED TO WEAR THIS VACANT GRIN, WADDLING OVER THE SAME PATH DAY IN, DAY OUT AND REPEATING THE SAME PHRASES TO EVERYONE I SPEAK TO...

YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE I CAN GET SOME SACRED STONES, DO YOU?

NO... BUT YOU COULD TRY OVER THERE

FREKKIN TYPICAL!

IF YOU THINK I'M TRAMPING ALL THE WAY UP THERE YOU'D BEST THINK AGAIN.

HANG ON A MINUTE, LET ME JUST CHECK MY POCKETS...

To Select Item

BONUS! AN, ER, SPOON! NOW LET'S GO FIND A MANHOLE COVER...

MAMMA -MIA!



EVENING
"FEARLESSLY CRAWLING THROUGH THREE FOOTBALL FIELDS' WORTH OF UNSPEAKABLE FILTH IN AN ATTEMPT TO GET TO WORK ON TIME (OR, AT LEAST, GET TO WORK AT ALL) EVANS STARTS TO THINK ABOUT ASKING FOR A RISE..."
THIS SECRET ROOM BETTER BE IMPRESSIVE, EVANS - THIS PLACE REEKS...
TRUST ME, JUST A LITTLE FURTHER...
...AND TA DA! WE, ER... CRAWL OUT OF THE BOG!
VOMIT
GENIUS. PURE GENIUS.
99 ENERGY
WAAHAAY, THAT SNIPER RIFLE'LL DO NICELY.
CAREFUL NOW, DON'T LET THEM SEE US.
OH JUST SHUT UP AND BLOW THEIR HEADS OFF.
RIGHT YOU ARE!
WHAT ABOUT HIM? HE LOOKS RIPE FOR A HEAD-SHOT...
NAH, I'LL NEVER GET THE CHANCE TO DO THIS AGAIN...
PUNT
YOUR CHEAP-ASS MULTIPLAYER TACTICS MAKE ME SICK!
HAVE SOME!
"NICE, EVANS, YOU LEEK-EATING FOOL... LOOK! THERE! IT'S THE DOOR TO THE MONSTER'S LAIR..."
WELL WE'VE MADE IT... GUESS THE BOSS MUST BE IN HERE.
BEST STOCK UP ON HEALTH THEN. WHO KNOWS WHAT HIDEOUSLY OBES CREATURE LIES WITHIN THE BELLY THAT THERE ROOM, SQUI
IF IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR HAGAR, IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.
SEE YA! I'M OUTTA HERE...
GOOD POINT, BUT WHY HAVE YOU STARTED TALKING LIKE AN RPG IMBECILE?
SORRY, FORCE OF HABIT.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING NOW?
LOOKING FOR EXTRA HEALTH... NICE ONE! THAT'LL SORT ME RIGHT OUT...
Armor Platidium Editoris aka THE WEAVERNATOR
WEAK SPOT: Gaping, bellowing cake-hole
AND WITH THAT, EVANS FACED OFF AGAINST HIS NEMESIS FOR THE FINAL SHOWDOWN...
SINCE WHEN DID DEFEATED BOSSES TURN INTO PIKMIN PELLETS... STOP TAKING LIBERTIES WITH THE STORYLINE, EVANS!
EAT LEAD!
OOH! THAT GOT ME RIGHT IN THE NIPPLE... AND IT REALLY HURTS!
PARP!
LOOKEE HERE - JUD'S SECRET GUN STASH!
THAT'S MY CUE, THEN...
GYAAA, IT'S ALL PAPERY... YEUCH... ALL... THE... MOISTURE... BEING SUCKED OUT OF MY... VOCAL CORDS! IT'S SUCKING ME DRY... BLAAAAARGH!!!
ALRIGHT LITTLE FELLAS... TAKING HIM BACK TO OLIMAR ARE YOU?
SCREW OLIMAR, MATE. WE'RE OFF TO VEGAS...



GRAB A BREAK FOR TWO TO NEW YORK, COURTESY OF ACTIVISION'S...

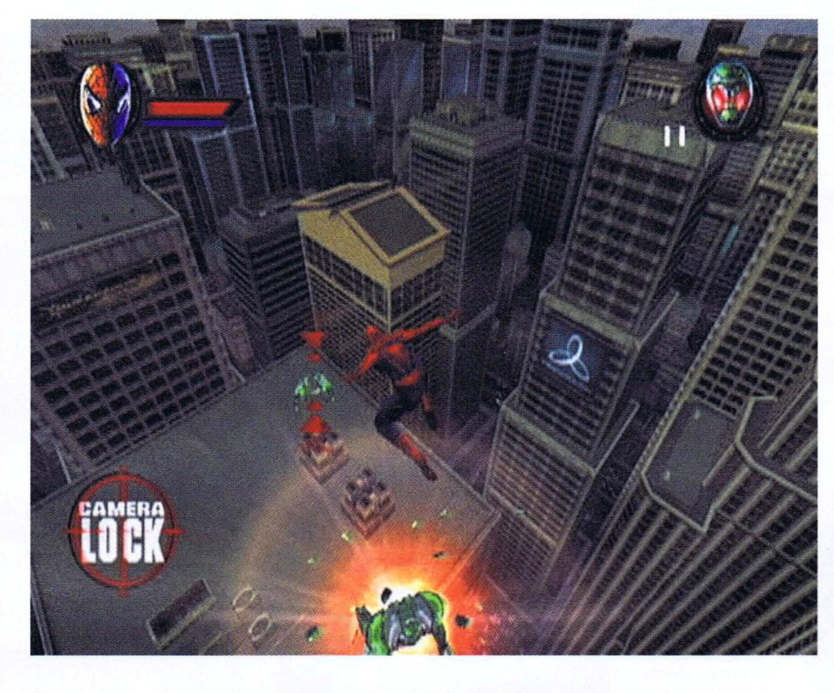
SPIDER-COMPO

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO...

You're going to like this one. As we all know, Spider-Man swings through the streets of New York trying to 'take down' the Green Coblin. Fair enough. Kittsy roams the streets of Bath doing much the same. If by the Green Goblin, you mean tramps. And if, by 'take down', you mean torturing.

Question is, if you – like Spider-Man and, er, Kittsy – were a superhero, what superhero would you be, and what would be your stomping ground? Would you parade the mean streets of Dudley as The Curry Crusader, a sweaty mess of lager-smelling foulness who uses the Power of Vindaloo to defeat his enemies? Or would you be Tractor-Man, a pig-wrestling, BSE-defeating farmer who protects rural Norfolk from housing developments and porcine cruelty?

We want to see – and we want to see pictorial evidence. Yep, that's right – it's a dignity-free zone here: so get your costumes on, show us your powers, and the best, funniest, most outrageous one wins a trip for two to the world's most exciting city. Nicely.



Everything you need to know about what you could be winning...

Shopping, eating, drinking, nice parks, skyscrapers, pretzels, toy shops, art galleries – New York is absolutely *magic*. If you've never been, then *you've got a serious problem*. Fortunately, **NGC** and Activision – the folks behind last month's *Spider-Man™: The Movie* game – are on hand to lend a, er, hand with this steaming-good compo, giving you and a mate a chance to jet across the pond, live it up in a swanky hotel for three nights, and flit about NYC with 300 bucks in yer pocket.

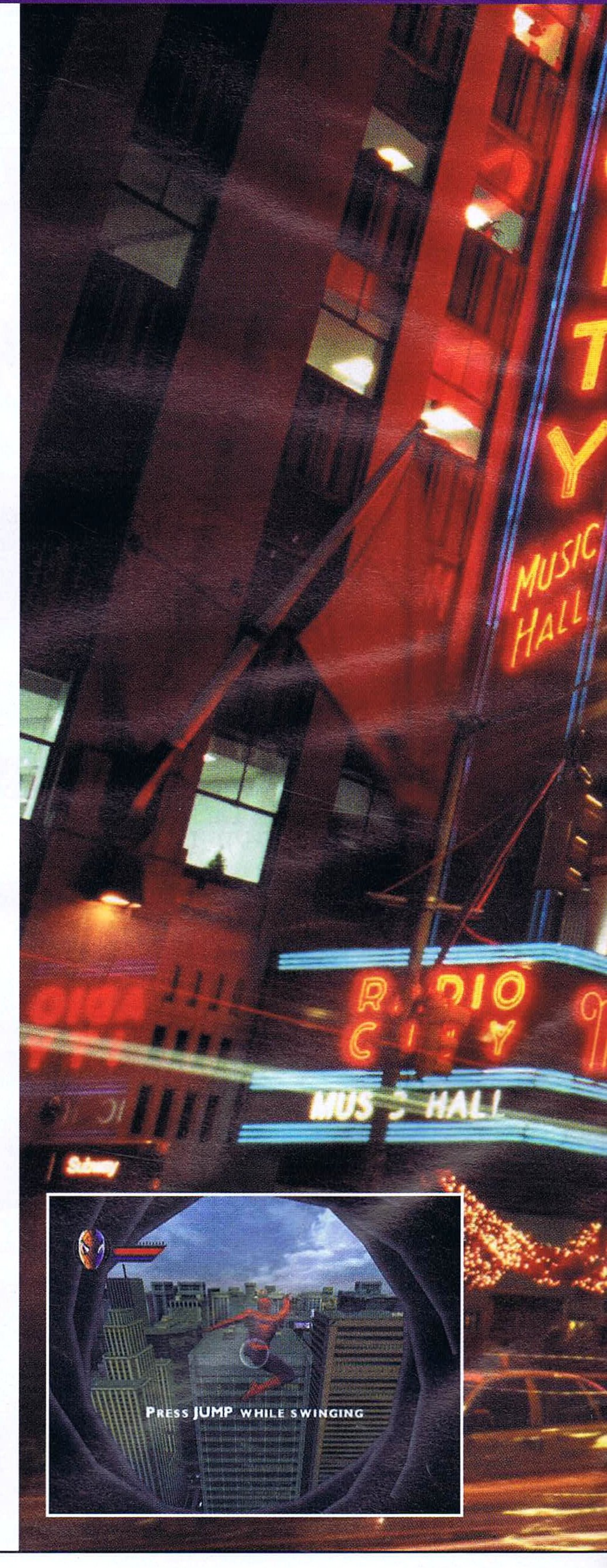
Yep, this has got to rate as about the best compo we've ever run. Especially as, if you're not the lucky recipient of a super-duper trip for two to The City That Never Sleeps™, you can still win one of five copies of the *Spider-Man™: The Movie* game, which we reviewed last issue

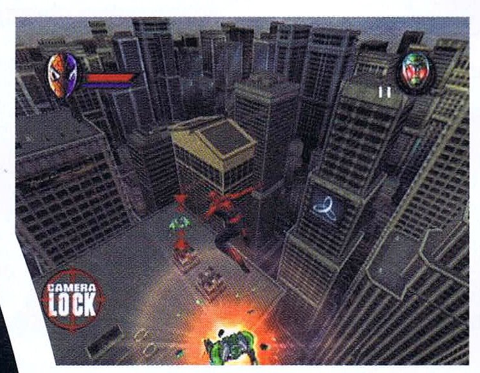
That's reeeeeeal nice.

But, as is our usual policy, we don't just go and *give* our prizes away. Nope. We make you work. And, similarly, we're going to make you work this time around – work for every inch of that plane ticket! EVERY INCH!

Want to know how? And why? Then cast your eyes up to the left there. Now.

SEND YOUR DELIGHTFUL ENTRIES INTO THIS ADDRESS:
'This Is My Father, Norman Osborn', **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.







WIN!

AN AMAZING THREE-NIGHT TRIP FOR TWO TO NEW YORK, INCLUDING TOP-DRAWER FLIGHTS, ACCOMODATION AND £300 SPENDING MONEY!

COMPETITION

Win a trip for two to the City That Never Sleeps!



THE (YAWN) RULES

1. The closing date for all entries is 21st August 2002.

2. The competition is open to all UK and Republic of Ireland residents except employees of Future Publishing Limited, Activision, any of their wholly owned subsidiaries, or parent companies, marketing services agencies, handling houses or other companies involved directly with the administration of this competition.

3. All entries must be sent to: 'This Is My Father, Norman Osborn', **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. All entries must be sent by prepaid post and received by 21st August 2002, irrespective of the date of posting. Proof of posting won't be deemed proof of delivery.

4. Any entry that is incomplete, illegible, late or otherwise does not comply with the rules may be deemed invalid, in the sole discretion of the Editor. That's Tim, obviously. You know, Tim *Weaver*. You know, the Edito... Oh, whatever.

5. All valid entries will be examined.

6. The judging will take place on 22nd August 2002. The winner will be notified by telephone. Please include a telephone number.

7. There is no cash alternative to the competition prize.

8. The Editor's decision on all matters affecting this competition is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

9. If the prize becomes unavailable for any reason, Future Publishing Limited and Activision reserve the right to replace it with another of equal value.

10. The winner agrees to permit Activision to use his or her name, photograph and/or likeness for any future marketing purposes.

11. If an entrant is under the age of 18, he or she **must** get the signed permission of a parent or guardian before entering. Also, if the winner is under 18, he or she **must** be accompanied on the trip by a parent/guardian. Get the a-okay from your folks before entering.

12. The winner of the trip (and their parent/guardian/friend) must be available to fly within eight weeks of the closing date. Travel must be completed by 31st October 2002. Just in time for the rainy season.

14. The winner will be responsible for ensuring that he or she (and their parent/guardian/friend) has a passport and – if necessary – a visa valid for the trip, as well as appropriate travel insurance.

15. Except where caused by their negligence, Future Publishing Limited and Activision accept no responsibility for any loss or delay caused by the airline, hotel or other third party or any other loss or damage suffered by the winner (or their parent/guardian/friend) as a result of winning the trip.

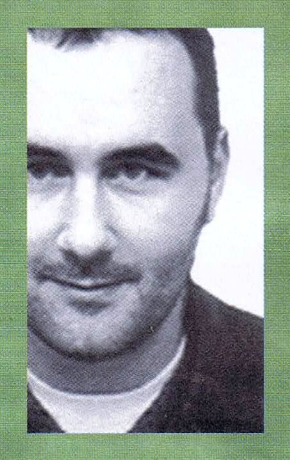
16. The promoter of this competition is Future Publishing Limited. A big thanks to Activision for providing the funds for the prize. These rules shall be governed by English law.

A 'HILARIOUS' JUMBLE SALE OF GAMES TRIVIA AND STALKING

NGC COMPENDIUM

TALK TIME

Want to find out what it's *really* like to work in games development? We give one of GC's top developers an **NGC** mobile and stalk them for a day.



WHO IS... PATRICK TONER

Patrick is a designer at Digital Integration, the Farnborough-based combat flight-sim specialists behind the forthcoming *Top Gun Combat Zones*. He's currently working on the Gamecube version of that game as well as its sequel, making him a prime candidate for stalking.

9.39AM

Hi there Patrick. Can we call you 'Rick?
No.
Not 'Rick. Right. So, you're hard at work at the moment, right?
Well, I'm kind of considering the idea of working.
Do you want some time to mull it over?
No, that's okay. Actually I was just doing my morning search of the internet for pictures of Natalie Portman and Liv Tyler.
Together?
Oh, in an ideal world...
Heh. We'll get our Paul to mock some up for you in Photoshop if you like. He's an expert at that sort of thing.
(Silence)
'Rick?
(Silence)
Er, I mean, Patrick?
(Click)

10.56AM

Hi! Made any progress?
With what?
The internet. Or the game.
I'm doing the game. I'm in full-on testing mode.
You mean searching for bugs and stuff?
Yeah. You're pretty sharp this morning.
Thanks!
Funnily enough, I've just found out that I didn't need to spend the last few weeks roaming the building to speak to coders and artists. I could have saved loads of time by using Microsoft Messenger instead.
Or the phone, for that matter.
Yes. Or the phone.
Talk to you later then.

12.30PM

Hey there. What's happening?
You caught me on eBay duty. I'm checking to see if I've won any auctions or owe any money.
What are you bidding on?
Oh, you know – the usual stuff... Japanese art books, mostly.



'Art books', eh?
Yes. They're very educational. I've also been having a conversation about the Top Gun sequel.
Interesting. How's that coming along?
It's still in its early stages. I was discussing the usual frustrations – you know, like team size and deadlines, that sort of thing.
We'll leave you to it.
Cheers. I'm off for lunch anyway.
Out to lunch, you mean.
Yes.

1.45PM

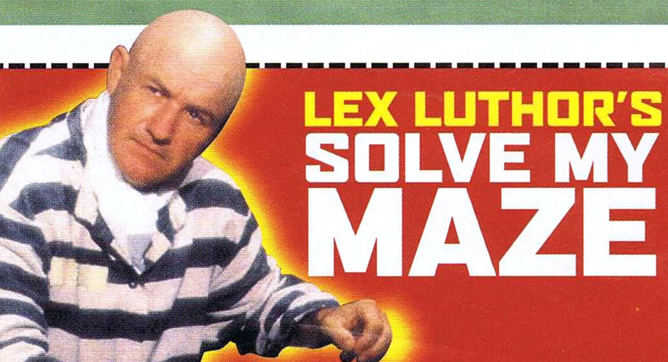
Hello. Did you have a pleasant break? A two-mile jog around the park and a fresh green salad, perhaps?
Not quite. It was more like a couple of thrashings at ISS Pro Evolution, followed by a Slim-a-Soup out of a packet.
The healthy option!
Absolutely. I have to keep my strength up. I've got a busy afternoon ahead.
Yeah? What's in store, then?
I'm juggling the script for the sequel, the mock-terrain generation for the sequel, and the testing and controller adjustments for the current version of the game. The original – the one that's coming to the Gamecube.
Anything else?
Isn't that enough?
Yeah, probably. So, one more thing to think about won't make much difference.
I'm not sure if I'm genuinely multi-tasking or just showing the strain of a short attention span.
Hmm, quite. While we've got you, any chance we could discuss this 'Rick thing?
(Click)

5.05PM

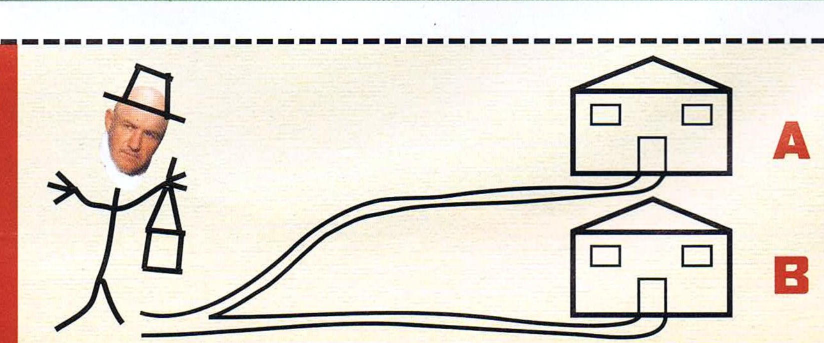
Hi Patrick. Are you still busy?
No, I'm done. Just a few things to finish up.
Like...
Like watering the plants on my desk. I've got four of them.
Very nice.
Yeah, it is. The plants last a lot longer since we moved offices. The air quality round here is much better.
That's nice. Our offices smell of dead dogs. Especially in the summer when Geraint wears his warm weather after shave.

8.00PM

Hi. You back yet?
Yes. I've just been making some tea. It's Super Noodles tonight.
Ooh!
On bread.
That's livin', alright.
Yes – it's highly nutritious. Anyway, my housemate Adam is having a pizza and Andy is eating what looks like lumps of meat. I think I got the best deal.
So are you going to be doing work from home tonight?
Nope. I might read a book or maybe I'll see what's on TV. I might even do a bit of drawing on the rather nice A0 drawing board that I nicked from the office.
You don't actually seem to do much work.
(Silence)
Er, so does your boss read our mag?
(Silence)
Patrick?
(Click)



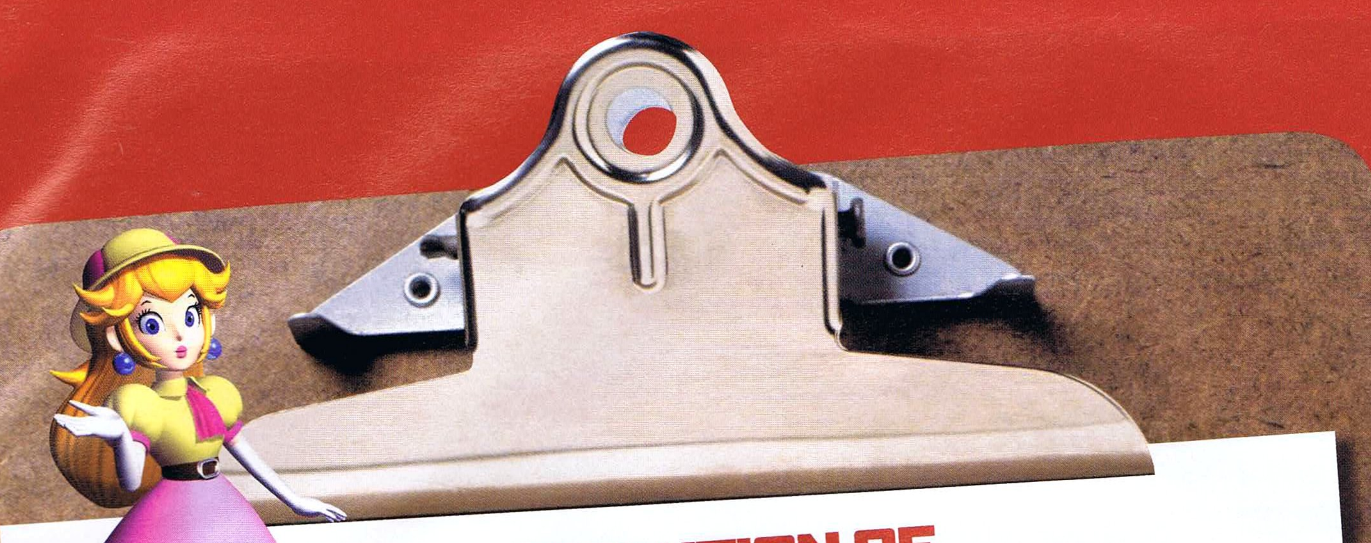
LEX LUTHOR'S SOLVE MY MAZE



WIN A NEW GC GAME!

Send your solutions to:
Solve my Maze, **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA12BW
OR EMAIL: ngc@futurenet.co.uk

Last month's winner: Kevin Larkham, Stoke





THE EVOLUTION OF... PEACH

The Mushroom Kingdom's one-woman royal family and her on-off relationship with a humble Italian plumber.

1 DONKEY KONG

Appearance With her blonde hair and pink dress, she looks like Peach. She even acts like Peach, thanks to her uncanny ability to get kidnapped every five minutes. But back then she was called Lady – later renamed Pauline.

Special move Yelling for help from 'Jumpman' the carpenter.



2 SUPER MARIO BROS

Appearance A quick name change (Peach in Japan, Princess Toadstool everywhere else) and Pauline became kidnap-prone royalty.

Special move A sloppy kiss for Mario at the end of the SNES remake. Mama mia!

3 SUPER MARIO BROS 3

Appearance Kidnapped as usual, but with the sense of humour to accept her recurring fate as just another one of those things.

Special move Making a slap-worthy joke at Mario's expense.

4 SUPER MARIO LAND

Appearance A fun bit of role-playing spiced up her relationship with Mario, as she donned a brown wig and pretended to be her never-before-seen sister, Daisy.

Special move Engineering her own kidnap to rekindle an Italian Stallion's passion.



5 YOSHI'S SAFARI

Appearance Space cadet who tells Mario to travel to 'Jewellery Land', where 'King Fret' and 'Prince Pine' have somehow mislaid 12 'gems'. Utter rubbish, but it's the first time she's called 'Peach' outside of Japan.

Special move Making a swift exit from this SNES turkey.



6 MARIO & WARIO

Appearance Lightness and ladyness traditionally equate to a fast character. Except in this mouse-driven SNES puzzler, Peach is slow and fat.

Special move Watching TV, panting and wheezing after getting up to fetch another slab of butter from the fridge.



7 SUPER MARIO 64

Appearance The mystery of the lady's real name is cleared up right at the start, as she signs her letter Princess Toadstool – with Peach added as a pet name for the use of her favourite plumber (and sometimes his brother).

Special move Like all princesses, Peach has coin-filled slides in her palace.



8 MARIO GOLF

Appearance Dainty lady golfer with little power or skill, but a devastating line in sarcastic put-downs. Golf is obviously the sport of royalty and bad losers.

Special moves Yelling "Nice shot!" whenever Mario slices yet another drive into the bunker.



9 SMASH BROS MELEE

Appearance A vision in pink as the power of Gamecube gives Peach a disturbingly realistic sheen.

Special move Pulling vegetables from the floor or fungus from inside her dress.



NGC TOP10

TOM CLANCY GAMES COMING IN 2002

That we've made up.



1 Tom Clancy's Dartboard Death
Fire scud missiles at a selection of dartboards with the names of terrorists in the bullseye.



2 Tom Clancy's Learn with Clancy
Kids edutainment. A is for AR-15 Rock River M4 Tactical, B is for BRNO N1 Semtex, C is...

3 Tom Clancy's Korea Centre
RTS. Select a nation, ie North Korea. Start a bombing campaign. Never stop. Ever.

4 Tom Clancy's Go Go Death Bomb
Bizarre Japanese role-player that Clancy had nothing to do with and doesn't understand.

5 Tom Clancy's Tom Clancy
Create your own Clancy and fight him. Accessories include tanks, guns and long knives.

6 Tom Clancy's It's-a-me Clancy!
Unique tie-up with Nintendo in which Clancy, dressed in Mario gear, guns down and kills Wario.

7 Tom Clancy's Nuclear Board
Board-game fun. Work your way round the world killing terrorists in nuclear bunkers.

8 Tom Clancy's Red Card Soccer
It's the US vs Iraq in the World Cup Final! Destroy the enemy using any means necessary.

9 Tom Clancy's Dog Inside-Out
Tour Clancymon Island taking photos of dogs you've blown to bits. Features Prof Oak.

10 WTW Wrestling
Worldwide Terrorist Wrestling. Give Bin Laden the clothesline he deserves in this spandex fight.



Your guide to the Gamecube planet's most exotic games.

TOTTOKO HAMUTARO



FACTS FOR THE TRAVELLER

GETTING THERE UK residents should hold on for official travel packages available next year
CURRENCY ¥4,800 (approx £26)
LANGUAGE Hamu-Hamu
ELECTRICITY 3V DC power supply (2 x 1.5V AA cells)
POPULATION 50 companies, making 2000+ licensed products
HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT Ritsuko Kawai
DEVELOPMENT Nintendo
HEALTH RISKS Empty wallets

The number one destination for animal lovers.

HISTORY

An established fixture in the Japanese traveller's itinerary for the last two years, Hamu-Hamu Land's days as a cherished and well-kept secret among western





connoisseurs of oriental esoterica are surely numbered.

Tottoko Hamutaro loosely translates as 'Trotting Hamsters', a title which speaks volumes about the primary focus of life in the area. The rodents lead leisurely, pampered lives, and are granted unlimited freedom to explore and roam as they please. They often embark on adventures which seem to last for weeks but are in fact rarely any longer than 22 minutes.

As global recognition beckons, the resort's authorities are set to drop the traditional Tottoko in favour of the vaguely westernised title Hamtaro, and many residents will be obliged to adopt new names in the interests of international trade.

EVENTS

A daily cartoon show captures the flavour of Hamu-Hamu life in animated form, and should be the first port of call for curious potential visitors.

The show tells legends based on the exploits of the area's most celebrated residents, the ubiquitous Hamutaro and his many hamster friends – the Hamu-chan-zu. Typically, the legends tend to revolve around doing good deeds for human owner Ryuko or dressing in amusing costumes (again, for the benefit of Ryuko). Few people over the age of 12 are able to withstand the intensity of an entire episode.

TRAVEL TIP *Hamsters exhibit this sort of behaviour only in Hamu-Hamu Land. If confined in large groups anywhere else, such as in a shoe box underneath a bed, they will develop cannibalistic urges and turn on one another – with hilarious consequences.*





ATTRACTIONS

The latest must-see attraction is Nintendo's *Tottoko Hamutaro 3*, featuring the widest range of hamster activities yet devised. But if the language barrier is a problem, wait until the holiday season before planning your visit, as the deployment of American English-speaking guides to certain parts of Hamu-Hamu is expected to commence in October.

The popular beat combo Morning Musume (an all-girl Japanese equivalent of All Stars) can often be heard performing traditional songs for the benefit of both humans and hamsters.



Members of the group also provided voices for a four-piece hamster band in the movie Hamuhamu Rando no Daiboken (Adventure in Hamham Land) which smashed box-office records when released as a double-header with the 25th Godzilla film in December 2001.

CULTURE

Tottoko Hamutaro's increasing influence on popular culture can only become more significant. Since the area was first described by its discoverer Ritsuko Kawai in a 1997 edition of Shoguku Ninensei magazine, more than seven million pieces of Hamutaro-related literature have been snapped up by youthful travellers in Japan. Hamu-Hamu officials confidently predict that



the area will soon be an even more popular attraction than Kanto and Johto, its only real rivals as a leisure destination for young people.

In terms of revenue, hamster-related tourism is currently neck-and-neck with the cash generated from Nintendo's regular excursions to Pokémon Island.

ACTIVITIES

• Comparing hamster love ratings is a favourite pastime among the locals, and something every tourist should try once. Don't forget to pack a link cable, mind.





• No visit to Hamu-Hamu Land would be complete without experiencing one of its famous hamster costume parades, in which owners dress their rodents in a variety of stylish fashions.

• Learning the local dialect is both simple and rewarding. Most visitors return from a first excursion to the world of Tottoko Hamutaro with a vocabulary of more than 80 hamster phrases (see 'Useful Phrases' side panel).

• Visitors are encouraged to help the hamsters collect and polish small rocks, a time-consuming task that sometimes reveals precious gemstones.

FURTHER READING

• Visit the highly detailed official website at www.hamutaro.com.

• The Asahi Shimbun was a source of useful information in compiling this guide. See www.asahi.com/english.

• News and travel information can be found at My Tottoko Hamutaro. Visit www.geocities.com/totoko_hamutaro.



USEFUL PHRASES

Tottoko Hamutaro's onomatopoeic language is a simple method of describing actions, intentions and feelings. Most travellers become fluent within a week.



1. Atata. An exclamation of surprise or disbelief. English eq: 'Doh!'

2. Techi-techi. The sound of a hamster's claws scratching as it walks.



3. Suri-suri. A declaration of affection between two hamsters.

4. Chick-ah. Repeated quickly, it is the sound of a hamster running.



5. Kushi-kushi. Can mean either shyness or a desire for cleanliness.

6. Heke. Verbal equivalent of slightly confused head-scratching.


F-ZERO AC
Created using state-of-the-art Triforce technology!
You won't believe your eyes!
10 PENCE 1 PLAY